









BENJAMIN DISRAELI, EARL OF BEACONSFIELD.

Photo: W. & D. Downey.

LORD BEACONSFIELD
AND OTHER TORY MEMORIES

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Thomas
T. E. ^{BY} *diva* KEBBEL
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WITH REMBRANDT PORTRAIT OF LORD BEACONSFIELD



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PREFACE.

IN offering these "Memories" to the public I wish it to be understood that, be their value what it may, they depend for it exclusively on my own personal experiences, and are in no wise indebted to either books or hearsay. In the second place, it should be stated that, besides some passages introduced from my own writings and acknowledged in their proper place, others may not improbably be found scattered up and down the pages of our periodical literature with which I have been long connected, though at this distance of time I should not know where to look for them. If any such do exist, they would, I am quite sure, form but a very small proportion of the whole volume, and would, equally with the rest of it, be drawn entirely from my own personal recollections.

I am, of course, referring only to those chapters which follow the sketches of Lord Beaconsfield, as these are republished directly, though not without alteration and re-arrangement, from the columns of the *Standard*.

I have not thought it necessary to restrict the book entirely to anecdote, narrative, or description. Such observations as the matter in hand seemed naturally to suggest are sometimes introduced, but at long intervals and in few words.

T. E. KEBBEL.

LONDON, March, 1907.

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LORD BEACONSFIELD

AND OTHER

TORY MEMORIES.

CHAPTER I.

LORD BEACONSFIELD.

Disraeli the Leader of a Reconstructed Party—My First Sight of Him—The Publication of "Coningsby" and "Sybil"—My Introduction to Disraeli—His Remarks on Bolingbroke.

THE first time I saw Lord Beaconsfield was a few years after I had left Oxford and had relinquished all thoughts of following my fortunes at the Bar, to which I had been originally destined. On leaving the University I took chambers in the Temple, and hoped for two or three years that I might be able to pursue the path chalked out for me. But family circumstances soon made it evident to me that I must find some more immediate means of supporting myself without further assistance from my relations.

At that time journalism had not become the common resort of gentlemen in want of an income, and unwilling or unable to wait for the tardy returns to be expected from the regular professions. The estimation in which it was held in those days is described with perfect truth by Trollope in his novel of "He Knew He Was Right." The public in general, and country people in particular, had the haziest conception of the machinery by which newspapers were produced. That

the higher class papers afforded regular and remunerative employment to a limited number of educated gentlemen was what few country parsons or squires who did not mix much in London Society or in literary circles understood or believed. And it was not all at once that journalism occurred to me in the light of a possible career and a short cut to independence. I had, however, ventured to send one or two short pieces to the *Press* newspaper, then recently established as the organ of the Tory Opposition; and I remember that while I was sitting at breakfast in our country parsonage at home one morning in 1855, dismally meditating on the dreary prospect which confronted me, the postman brought me a letter which decided my fate. It was from Mr. Coulton, the Editor of the *Press*, which at that time was said by Mr. Gladstone to be "admirably written," offering me a place on the paper, which I at once accepted; and as Mr. Disraeli (for so must we continue to call Lord Beaconsfield throughout the greater part of these reminiscences) was in frequent communication with Mr. Coulton, it was not long before I came in contact with the great man himself.

Mr. Disraeli at that time was firmly established as the Leader of the Conservative Party in the House of Commons. He had gained their confidence by the skill with which he had re-formed their broken ranks, had reclaimed to their colours numerous waverers or deserters, and finally had formed a Government which the public in general allowed to have played its part with dignity and efficiency. He always looked back on this stage of his career with great satisfaction. He often told me of the pains which he had taken to reconstruct the party and the success which had re-

warded them. The Conservative Ministry of 1852 showed how well he had performed his task. Out of the broken and dispirited remnants which accepted his leadership in 1848 he had built up a powerful Opposition, had drawn from its ranks men capable of filling with credit the highest offices in the State, and had shown the world that there was again a Conservative Party qualified both by numbers and ability to take the reins of government whenever the Liberals should drop them. To the younger generation of Tories he presented just that combination of originality, courage and wit which was a welcome change after the Parliamentary respectability which followed the death of Mr. Canning. They asked for nothing better. After the great tergiversation of 1846 and the coalition of contradictories in 1853, men had ceased to inquire too curiously about principles.

The personal recollections to which my articles in the *Standard* were as closely as possible confined will here be extended to all such reminiscences as are in any way connected with the name and fame of the Tory leader, showing how his influence permeated all ranks of society, and how wide and how deep was the impression created, apart from all political considerations, by his unique personality. I remember my first sight of him well ; and, though but momentary, it printed itself on my mind in more vivid and lasting colours than any subsequent interviews of much longer duration. At that time, when Parliament was sitting, it was the custom of Mr. Coulton every Friday night to go down to the House of Commons as late as could conveniently be managed, returning to the office in the Strand with a bundle of pencil

notes dictated by Mr. Disraeli, to be moulded into the first leader for next day's paper. He more often than not brought back with him some terse and neatly turned sentences, or some epigrammatic sarcasm, which savoured of the master hand. Coulton was a capital writer, but he had not that particular gift. "Lord Aberdeen's Peace Government against its will drifted into war, and Lord Palmerston's War Government against its will drifted into peace," was a sentence which exactly hit off the situation in the winter of 1856. It was Disraeli's object, in this epigram, to show that a Coalition Government could have no fixed or definite policy, and must be at the mercy of events.

It was my business at this time to go down to Mr. Coulton's house, which is now, I think, 16, Old Queen Street, Westminster, every Thursday afternoon, to arrange about articles; and there, for the first time, I set eyes upon my future patron. He was coming out of Mr. Coulton's house just as I was going in, and I remember that Coulton said two or three words to him which I did not distinctly catch, but I suppose they referred to the newcomer. He threw a careless side-glance at myself as he walked out, and I see him before my mind's eye now as clearly as I did at that moment. He was then in his fifty-second year, and looked younger. His lithe, erect figure, clad in the well-known black frock-coat, buttoned rather low down, the grey trousers, the black or dark green neckerchief, tied with a neat bow—for he seldom, I think, wore anything else—all fixed themselves in my memory, though the features which surmounted them might well have absorbed my attention to the exclusion of everything else.

It was a face, I thought, indicative of great reserve power, and bore the *cachet* which Mr. Thackeray says is always visible in great men : " They may be as mean on many points as you or I : but they carry their great air. They speak of common life more largely and generously than common men do. They regard the world with a manlier countenance, and see its real features more fairly than the timid shufflers who only dare look at life through blinkers or to have an opinion when there is a crowd to back it." This is so curiously applicable to Mr. Disraeli, and so eminently characteristic of his whole career, that I wonder it has never been applied to him.

It was not till two years afterwards that I was actually introduced to Mr. Disraeli, and in the meantime, before referring to the conversations with which from time to time he was kind enough to indulge me, I must revert to an earlier period and to the work which first attracted the attention of the world at large, who knew little as yet of his parliamentary reputation or of the earlier novels which, with the exception perhaps of " Vivian Grey," were almost forgotten.

I remember an elder brother coming down from London during my school holidays and astonishing us all with the marvellous tale of " Young England." " Have you read ' Coningsby ' ? " was, he assured us, on everyone's lips. Not to have read " Coningsby " was what Count Mirabel in " Henrietta Temple " would have called a *bêtise*. People in general, however, did not know what to make of it ; and no one described the sensation which it created in fashionable circles better

than the author himself. The dandy who had dined with the Regent, and was a dandy still, enjoying life as much as ever, inquires of his friend Mr. Melton, supposed to have been meant for James Macdonald, what this new thing was that young Coningsby had brought from abroad, and which everybody was going to believe in. "A sort of magnetism, or unknown tongues," the dandy concluded it must be. On hearing that it was not that sort of thing at all, but that it required a "deuced deal of history," he observed that "one must brush up one's Goldsmith." I merely quote from so well-known a book to show the absurd ideas which "Coningsby" inspired in some quarters. Another class felt more aggrieved by the "Venetian Constitution." To have all their previous ideas of our glorious Constitution in Church and State suddenly upset by a novel! Who was the upstart who thus ventured to tamper with all our most cherished traditions? Out on him! Young England indeed! and grave men would sometimes mutter the name of Rehoboam, and ask how it fared with *him* when he chose to rely on young Israel.

This was the kind of talk which went on in many a country parsonage and manor house; and such prejudices were not mitigated by Henry Sidney's views about the peasantry or the praises bestowed upon Eustace Lyle, which were thought to savour of Popish proclivities, and still further fomented the alarm which the Roman Catholic Relief Act had kindled, and which the Oxford movement had inflamed. Then, of course, all the ridiculous stories with which we have so long been familiar were raked up against Disraeli — his first parliamentary speech, the green velvet coat, the

long ringlets, the laced ruffles. Such was the atmosphere in which my first impressions of Mr. Disraeli were formed. But there was a counter influence at work which tended slowly to modify them. By the older people this was not so much felt, but by the younger generation, who had come under the influence of the Oxford revival, it was soon recognised, and especially after the publication of "Sybil," that these striking pictures represented only one-half of a great religious and political movement, of which the other half had started from Oriel. I doubt if Mr. Disraeli himself ever saw the connection between the two so clearly as he might have done. Had he done so, it would have saved him from some mistakes which exercised a mischievous effect on his after life.

But, at all events, in "Sybil" he had given such apparent evidence of his sympathies with Anglicanism, and showed so much apparent insight into the real history of the Church, that all the younger Tories and High Churchmen began to look to him as a champion who might in the end do as much for their principles as Mr. Gladstone. Young men who had been taught to regard Charles I. as a martyr and the Rebellion as a great crime, found it hard to reconcile this belief with what they were equally required to profess—namely, that William III. was a hero, and the Revolution a great blessing. They had, however, accepted the current theory without much inquiry, though Scott had done something to make them suspicious of it; and when Mr. Disraeli cut the Gordian knot by declaring that the popular view of 1688 was founded on a total misconception of the national history, they welcomed the discovery with enthusiasm.

Of course, it was imputed to him that he meant a great deal more than this, and that under his denunciation of the Venetian Constitution lurked the intention of reviving personal government. That such an idea ever took practical shape in his mind I do not believe. What he told me himself has always led me to suppose that his aim was rather to correct what he thought some mistaken views of English history than to suggest any monarchical revival for present adoption. "Coningsby" called popular attention to what had really been done by the legislation of 1828, 1829, and 1832. The old Constitution, whatever its faults or its vices, Venetian or Batavian, was something, as Mr. Gladstone has somewhere said, in which a man could believe as a whole: something which supplied him with a real political faith. Mr. Disraeli did not think that its place was supplied by the Tamworth Manifesto. But that the void might be filled by a revival of the old form of monarchy was an idea which never, I think, passed out of the realm of imagination into the region of reality.

As I got to know him better I became aware how large a part in his political speculations had been played by his imagination. It dwelt fondly on the spectacle presented by the Tory party under the first two Georges, on their struggle with the Whig oligarchy, and on the efforts of Tory statesmen to emancipate the Crown from their control. That the author of "Coningsby" may have amused himself by living in an ideal world, and brooding so closely over past conditions as to fancy himself for the moment in the midst of them, is a tenable hypothesis supported by the example of Sir Walter Scott. But we may be satis-

fied with thinking that the theories of "Coningsby" and "Sybil" were put forward rather as a contribution to the history of England and an exposure of the false impressions which had been handed down by interested parties, than with any ulterior object or any serious intention of reducing them to practice.

My reason for thinking so is this. After the downfall of the Palmerston Ministry in 1858, the *Press* changed hands, and I ceased to be a political contributor. Then I thought I should like to see Mr. Disraeli, and, as this was easily managed, I was invited on a certain day to call at Grosvenor Gate—I think on a Sunday. He received me very kindly, and, perhaps, with his peculiar views on the subject of youth, my age told in my favour. I remember being much impressed—perhaps, indeed, rather amused—by one little circumstance which occurred while I was sitting with him. A servant brought him in a card, which he looked at attentively for a minute, and then said, "Tell his Highness I will be with him very shortly," and then turned round to renew the conversation about Bolingbroke with your humble servant. Without referring directly to his estimate of that statesman given in "Coningsby," he spoke very highly of him, and advised me particularly to read his correspondence.

I left Grosvenor Gate without any reason to think that less was meant by the political speculations which had so startled the public when they first appeared than I had hitherto—perhaps too readily—supposed. But shortly after the above conversation I wrote an article on Bolingbroke for *Fraser's Magazine*, of which Mr. Froude was then editor, when, in spite of my reverence for the author of "Coningsby," I took occasion to ask

whether, had Lord Bolingbroke continued to take an active part in public affairs after the death of Queen Anne, he would ever have indulged in such reflections as we find in "The Patriot King" and elsewhere. But for the policy of proscription initiated by the Whigs in 1714, Bolingbroke would have taken office under George I. "He believed himself," I said, "a second Cicero in exile, and gratified his taste by a great deal of fine writing to prove that Walpole and his party were re-enacting the part of Augustus, who only exercised absolutism more readily through the medium of a servile Senate. But such language as this was not natural to the man. His brain was too strong, his intellect too masculine, not at once to have seen through the weakness of his own position, had he been obliged to look it fairly in the face. He must have known well enough that no monarchy could be permanent which depended upon the character of a single individual. His experience of James II. must, we should think, have opened his eyes, if they wanted any opening."

On Mr. Disraeli's receipt of a volume that contained this essay, he wrote me a letter, which will be found on another page, expressing warm approval of its contents, including the article on Bolingbroke. The next time I saw him I asked him in person the same question which I had raised in my essay: What did he think would have happened had Queen Anne lived till Bolingbroke had matured his schemes, and secured the ascendancy of the Tory Party throughout the country. He said that if Bolingbroke had restored the Stuarts, and the Stuarts had been reconciled to the Church of England, there need have been no such

startling change as some historians have supposed. Government would have been carried on much as it had been under Anne. Had Bolingbroke, on the other hand, succeeded in making terms with "the Elector of Hanover, and placing a Tory king upon the throne, St. John himself would simply have been another Walpole." In that case we should probably have avoided two costly wars, some millions of debt, and a good deal of Parliamentary corruption. Bolingbroke and the Tories would have carried on the administration instead of Walpole and the Whigs.

"Then, sir," I said, "we should still have had the Venetian Constitution, and the Sovereign would still have been a Doge." "No," he said, "not the Venetian Constitution. The country would not have been governed by a few great Whig families—the Council of Ten, who kept all real power in their own hands. The Sovereign, indeed, might still have been a Doge, but that would have been owing to his ignorance of England and English affairs, not to the deliberate purpose of the oligarchy." "But," I continued, "how would Bolingbroke and the first two Georges have agreed about foreign affairs—about Germany, for instance?" This, he saw, was a more difficult question to answer. But it was important to remember that much of Bolingbroke's declamation against the German Alliance and the sums which it had cost us was written after Sir Robert Walpole had been Minister for twenty years, and not before. It is fair to conclude that Bolingbroke would have found some way of reconciling the King's German proclivities with English interests, had he been Minister from the first. In 1740 he only saw that Walpole

had failed to do so, and that the consequences had been disastrous.

Thus we see that when compelled to take a practical view of eighteenth-century politics Disraeli could lay aside his ideals, if he ever secretly cherished any, and face the situation as it really was. We might suppose—and many persons have supposed—from the language used in “Coningsby” and “Sybil,” that when he wrote these novels he really believed that England’s best hope for the future lay in the restoration of the Royal prerogative to the point at which William III. left it. I will not say but what he might have thought as much in the abstract, or even that the pre-Revolution monarchy was preferable to the one that succeeded it. He certainly seems to have agreed with Lord Shelburne that a real monarchy was preferable to a “sham” one, as Shelburne always styled the monarchy of the first two Georges; but that he ever thought the revival of Shelburne’s “real royalty” was a practical possibility in the middle of the nineteenth century, all I ever heard him say about the subject forbids me to believe.

CHAPTER II.

LORD BEACONSFIELD (*continued*).

Disraeli's Views on Lord Derby's Refusal to Form a Government—As Reformer—A Blue-book Mystery—Lord Palmerston's Second Administration—Disraeli's Appreciation of Pluck—In Isolation—Literary Admirations—As Journalist—His Estimate of Contemporary Biography—Attitude towards the Church of England.

I HAVE said that my first introduction to Mr. Disraeli was in 1858, soon after the formation of Lord Derby's second Ministry, when Lord Palmerston had just been defeated on the Conspiracy to Murder Bill. At the same time, he talked a good deal about the Coalition and about Lord Derby's refusal to take office in 1855. He was now in office, it was true; and that was something. But he was still smarting under the disappointment which he experienced three years before. He knew well enough that the opportunity which arrived in 1858 was not the opportunity which was lost in 1855. He dwelt on this at some length, and on more occasions than one. At the earlier date the party retained the full strength which the General Election of 1852 had given them. In 1858 it was weakened by the loss of at least thirty seats in 1857. He said that Lord Derby was an essentially timid man, and, no doubt, he had not the daring spirit of his colleague, who, as the fifteenth Earl, once told me, would always go "double or quits."

However, it was clear to me that Mr. Disraeli was

much disappointed, and he could not help referring to the character of the last Conservative Ministry in justification of his chagrin. That Government had been overthrown on the question of Free Trade. Had not this been made the issue on which the General Election of 1852 was fought, the Conservatives, he thought, would have had a majority at the polls. And if it had not been thrust prominently forward in the House of Commons, the Government would not have been beaten on the Budget. But in 1855 the controversy was dead and buried. The Liberals had nothing to appeal to but their own mismanagement of the war. Had Lord Derby taken office, and had he met with any factious opposition, an appeal to the country would infallibly have given him a majority. Everything was in his favour.

Mr. Disraeli returned to this view of the subject again and again. He had recalled, he said, a great many seceders, he had brought back Gladstone, he thought, at least half way to his old friends—"the half-regained Eurydice," as he said Lord Derby called him; and he evidently believed that, in spite of what had occurred on the night of the division (December 16, 1852), Gladstone would have joined Lord Derby had the latter taken office three years afterwards and shown himself strong enough to keep it. It appeared to me that this was what he thought. Yet it does not tally with his letter to Lord Malmesbury of February, 1855, in which he says of Sir James Graham, Mr. Gladstone, and Sidney Herbert, who had just resigned, "They first refused to join Lord Derby, and stopped Palmerston, who was ready to do so, by promising to take office under him. They thus pre-

vented a strong Government from being formed, and having induced Lord Palmerston to accept the Premiership on the understanding that he would have their assistance, they now leave him in the lurch at a moment of great difficulty and danger." In the recently published *Life of Lord Herbert of Lea* we have a full and most interesting account of these complicated negotiations.

Then, Mr. Disraeli continued, came the unfortunate affair of the *Arrow*, the Chinese War, and Lord Palmerston's appeal to the British lion, which undid all his work, and laid once more in ruins the powerful political party which he had raised from the dust and rehabilitated with so much skill, patience, and confidence. Now, he said, he had all his work to do over again. Fortune, however, was kind to him, and soon gave him another chance.

Lord Palmerston, at the beginning of 1858, had undertaken to bring in a Parliamentary Reform Bill. When he went out of office Mr. Bright took up the question and starred the provinces, delivering a series of inflammatory harangues in the North of England during the autumn of that year, which had the effect which they were intended to have, and made it almost impossible for the new Government to shelve the question. Accordingly, Mr. Disraeli and Lord Derby came to the conclusion that they would make an honest effort to deal with it, and stand or fall by their success. I now began to see a good deal of Mr. Disraeli. He was kind enough to think I might be of some use to him; and a monthly periodical was started, which was intended to support the Government, and deal especially

with the question of Reform. This being so, Mr. Disraeli promised to give me full particulars of the Government plan before any inkling of it had leaked out in other quarters.

He was as good as his word. In 1859 I went several times to Grosvenor Gate, and he dictated to me every detail of the Bill of that year, with the reasons assigned for it. I can see him now, as he stood with his back to the fire and his hands very often on his hips, a favourite attitude with him in the House, and laid the whole plan before me with the utmost fulness and precision. The two leading features were the equalisation of the town and county franchise, and the restriction of the borough freeholder to a single vote—that is to say, depriving him of the right of voting both for town and county on the same qualification. There is no occasion to discuss these proposals now. It is more important to note that both Mr. Disraeli and his chief were condemned by many Conservatives for touching reform at all. Leave it alone, they said, and if you are turned out on the question it will be all the better for you hereafter that you have not sacrificed your consistency. Mr. Disraeli told me that Lord Derby was just as eager to grapple with the question as he was himself. We thought it highly impolitic, if not impossible, he said, for the Conservative Party to take up a *non possumus* attitude on a great popular question. Had they done so, he proceeded, they must have dwindled away like the Jacobites or the Non-jurors; and he always insisted strongly on this point, that parliamentary reform being a constitutional question, the Conservatives had as much right to deal with it as the Liberals. “I was determined,” he said, “to vin-

dicating the right of the party to a free hand, and not to allow them to be shut up in a cage formed by the Whigs and Radicals; confined within a certain magic circle which they were not to step out of at the peril of their lives." He was fond of this illustration, and he used it more than once.

Neither the article which I founded on his notes nor his own speeches in the House could save a Reform Bill which was foredoomed to failure from the first. Lord John Russell, who considered that the Tories were poaching on his own preserve, succeeded in throwing out the Bill on the second reading; and it is probable that the Government expected nothing else. It had all the effect which probably Lord Derby intended, and caused the question to be shelved for another seven years. Now that their affected zeal for reform had restored the Whigs to power, the measure of their earnestness was soon taken. After one faint attempt to keep up appearances, the subject was dropped. Mr. Disraeli summed up his own view of the matter in the pithy remark, almost the last he spoke to myself upon the subject, "We pricked the imposture."

Parliament was dissolved in April, 1859, and though the Conservatives gained a good many seats, they did not get a clear majority. When the new Parliament met, a vote of want of confidence was moved by Lord Hartington, to which Mr. Disraeli replied immediately in a speech which Lord Palmerston pronounced a masterpiece. Had it been possible, Palmerston said, to procure a verdict of not guilty for the Government,

Si Pergama dextrâ,
Defendi possent, etiam hac defensa fuissent.

But the case he had in hand was too hopelessly bad for the most consummate advocate to establish.

Lord Palmerston little knew how near he came to being a false prophet. The vote of want of confidence was carried by a very small majority, only thirteen in a House of 633, and would not have been carried at all had the papers relating to the Franco-Austrian War been laid on the table of the House in time for members to read them before the division was taken. Mr. Delane believed that in that case the Opposition would have failed, and Lord Clarendon and Lord Malmesbury knew it. We are not concerned to inquire how long the Government could have held their ground afterwards had they weathered the first attack. The interesting question, and the one that specially concerns Mr. Disraeli, is why the papers were not produced. I ventured to ask Mr. Disraeli a few days afterwards what was the reason of it; why he had not laid these papers on the table. I remember he turned upon me rather sharply, the only time I ever saw him offended at any question I asked him. "Why, how could I produce them when they were not printed?" I do not pretend to reconcile this statement with Lord Malmesbury's, who says that Mr. Disraeli would not allow him to produce the Blue Book. This, if the book was producible, seems a strange story. In Lord Malmesbury's Diary we find it written that "Clarendon and all the Whigs, and our men, say that it would have saved us if it had come out." This testimony to its value disposes of the ingenious suggestion that Mr. Disraeli kept back the papers not because he had not read them, but because he had. But it still remains to be asked why Lord Derby, who must have been

acquainted with the contents of the Blue Book, did not insist on its being produced.

Lord Malmesbury can only say that Lord Derby was ill of the gout, and tired of office, and glad of any excuse for getting out of it. But he would hardly have treated his party and his colleagues so badly as to forbid publication of a document which would have saved them from defeat, and have fully justified the foreign policy for which he himself was, of course, responsible, merely because he was himself tired of fighting; that was not his nature. Mr. Disraeli's curt reply to myself can offer no solution. Everything that Lord Malmesbury says points to the belief that the Blue Book was in a sufficiently forward state to have been produced much sooner than it was. What Mr. Disraeli told me simply negatives this assumption. I could see that he was a little angry at being asked about it. And, of course, after such a distinct and positive assertion I could pursue the subject no further. There must, one would think, be some explanation in the background. I never heard Mr. Disraeli say another word about it.

The party, however, continued to be much dissatisfied. They were not tired of office, if Lord Derby was; and, besides that, they believed that their leader in the House of Commons, whom they had hitherto regarded as a tactician of the first class, had been guilty of a great blunder, which, for a time, lowered their confidence in him. I think Mr. Disraeli felt this. He might have made a few mistakes, but when he reflected on what he had done for the party, when he compared it as it was in 1849 with what it had become in 1859, he might well have expected that worse blunders would

be overlooked. He knew better than the rank and file of the party, at all events, what measures had been taken to secure the defeat of the Conservatives. He would often dwell on the adroitness with which Lord Palmerston had turned his defeat on the Orsini case to his own great advantage. He seemed to admire him for it, as we sometimes admire the boldness and dexterity of some great criminal. He always assured me, as I continued to write for the party, though not in the *Press*, that a secret understanding had been arrived at between Palmerston and Louis Napoleon at Compiègne, by which the latter undertook so to time the outbreak of the war with Austria as just to fall in with the General Election in England; Lord Palmerston well knowing what a useful weapon it would place in the hands of the Opposition. That the Government had failed to prevent war, that they had greatly provoked it by their support of Austria, and so forth, were assertions which told forcibly at the moment against Lord Derby. One story is good until another is told. Palmerston and his friend in Paris outmanœuvred Lord Derby and Disraeli. The result lay upon the surface. But time has long ago done justice to all the actors in this now half-forgotten drama.

In those days Mr. Disraeli would sometimes talk over the position of Mr. Gladstone. He never spoke of him either then or afterwards with any bitterness. In 1858 it is known that he addressed a pressing invitation to Mr. Gladstone to join Lord Derby's Cabinet. The letter, dated May 28th, with Mr. Gladstone's answer, is given at full length in Mr. Morley's *Life*. It is obvious from this letter that Mr. Gladstone was

still desirous of posing as a Conservative, and it was not, I fancy, till he became Leader of the House under Earl Russell and allied himself closely with Mr. John Bright that all hope of reunion with him was finally abandoned. Mr. Gladstone himself, in spite of occasional skirmishes in Parliament, continued to be on friendly terms with Disraeli in private life. So, at least, I was told by Lady Beaconsfield, who said that after any sharp encounter in the House of Commons Mr. Gladstone would frequently come round to Grosvenor Gate just to show that he "bore no malice." But, in spite of what I have just said, I can scarcely believe that Mr. Disraeli himself had any real belief in the possibility of regaining Mr. Gladstone. I do not think any political difference would have prevented it. In fact, at that moment I doubt if there was any. But Mr. Disraeli took intense interest in the "management" of the Conservative Party. He often referred to his own success as a party leader, and I have known him contrast his own reconstruction of the party after 1846 with Peel's reconstruction of it after 1832, a comparison which he evidently thought much in his own favour.

Now, if Mr. Gladstone had consented to sit on the Treasury bench alongside of Mr. Disraeli, though the latter might have been the nominal leader, yet much of the authority attaching to that position must necessarily have been transferred to his colleague. In the Conservative party in 1858 there were still many members who had once looked up to Gladstone as the great Tory and High Church statesman. They would have been apt always to take their cue from him and look to him for the word of command. That this would have been gall and wormwood to Mr. Disraeli it is need-

less to say ; and that he foresaw the situation is clear from a passage in the letter referred to. He was fond of talking of the evils of a divided leadership. This had been one of his chief topics against the Aberdeen Ministry, to which he often referred in his conversations with myself, and I am sure he was often thinking that the union of himself and Mr. Gladstone in the same Cabinet would, *mutatis mutandis*, have been Palmerston and Aberdeen over again.

After the General Election of 1859 and the formation of Lord Palmerston's second Administration, the relations between Mr. Disraeli and his party continued to be rather strained. There was also a strong feeling in favour of not displacing Lord Palmerston, which the Opposition could have done at any moment. While he was in office Conservatism was supported on both sides of the House. Had he been turned out he could at once have fraternised with the Radicals. This kind of arrangement, however, was not much to Mr. Disraeli's taste. He was no *laissez-faire* politician. And I think, from what he said to me on various occasions, though not in so many words, namely, that Tory principles should be represented by Tory statesmen, he felt that one who had worked so hard for the party as he had done himself had a right to expect that, when an opportunity offered of rewarding his services, it should not be thrown away. Perhaps many of his followers, and possibly even Lord Derby, might not be disposed to take the same view of the question. But it was natural that Mr. Disraeli should take it ; and twice, as I shall have occasion to point out, he was doomed to disappointment, either

through the lukewarmness or indiscretion of leading colleagues.

He sometimes referred to the famous scene in the House of Commons when the "favourite bolted"—in other words, when Mr. Walpole, frightened by Lord Palmerston's threat of resignation, withdrew a resolution which was almost certain to have involved the defeat of the Government. But he never spoke with any bitterness of it. He admired men like Lord John Russell, with pluck enough for twenty men, or like Lord Lyndhurst, who could have organised a *coup d'état*. He was fond of talking about "great men and great times" without any express reference to his contemporaries, but rather to indulge his humour. I have heard him speak highly of Atterbury, and his offer to proclaim James III. in his lawn sleeves. This was the kind of daring, the nothing-venture-nothing-have principle, which appealed to him most strongly; and I dare say he may on one or two occasions have repeated to himself Atterbury's well-known exclamation, "Here is the finest cause in Europe lost for want of spirit."

After the above fiasco Disraeli was for a time, perhaps, rather isolated from the bulk of his party. He sat on the front Opposition bench with the same imperturbable countenance which he always wore, rarely speaking to anyone, and apparently indifferent to any taunts which might be thrown at him from the other side. Yet I have been told—I think it was by Mr. Oliphant—that this indifference was more apparent than real; and that when he was really stung, his countenance darkened and assumed a swarthy hue, which betrayed his real feelings. Mr. Oliphant sat

opposite to him in the House of Commons, and had every opportunity of watching him. But I never heard this from anybody else, and I do not ask my readers to believe it implicitly. Lord Malmesbury says that the speech on Walpole's withdrawal was "furious," and gave great offence to the party. I can scarcely credit that. There is nothing in the speech which deserves such an epithet, though the speaker did not affect to disguise his disappointment and vexation.

About this time I often had conversations with him on general subjects. He admired the Augustan literature more than, I think, the Victorian. He admired in literature what he shone in himself—epigram, irony, the lofty sneer, the cool sarcasm, the rapier-like retort.

It is said that those members of the Tory party who after 1859 were most dissatisfied with his leadership were deterred from any attempt to supersede him by the consciousness of what they would have to expect, if he took a seat below the gangway. Of literary style he would probably have taken the "Patriot King" for a model. Of Pope he was a warm admirer, and the author of "The Dunciad" was one of the few English poets whom he ever quoted. Talking of Scott, he said he thought "Redgauntlet" was one of his finest creations, if not the very finest. Of contemporary writers I do not recollect hearing him say much. He asked me if I did not think that both Dickens and Thackeray had written themselves out, and as the question was asked just after the publication of "Lovel the Widower" and "Denis Duval," while Dickens had come down to "Great Expectations" and "Our Mutual Friend," I had no difficulty in giving an affirmative answer.

He often praised the old *Morning Chronicle*, as it was edited by Black and Perry, as, with one exception, our best newspaper style. The exception was Cobbett, whom he thoroughly appreciated. He thought him superior to Junius, superior to Fonblanque, and superior to the best articles in the newly-started *Saturday Review*. Indeed, he availed himself very largely of Cobbett's "History of the Protestant Reformation," and in "Sybil" he puts into Walter Gerard's mouth Cobbett's very words and arguments. But it was, of course, of the *Political Register* that Mr. Disraeli was thinking when he spoke of Cobbett as the first journalist of the century, and it would certainly be difficult to name anything superior to the article which appeared in the *Register* of July 30th, 1803, entitled, "Important Considerations for the People of the Kingdom," pointing out to them the certain consequences of a French invasion. Of Mr. Disraeli's own talents as a leading-article writer, I only know of one genuine specimen, and that is the first leader in the first number of the *Press*, which came out early in 1853. The style is his own. He did not imitate either Bolingbroke or Cobbett, or any other writer whom he admired.

I have already stated that the *Press* passed out of his hands in 1858. But early in the sixties he was beginning to think of founding another paper to supply its place. The Conservative Party missed a chance here. The *Pall Mall Gazette* had not yet made its appearance. There was a vacant space to be filled, and it might just as well have been filled by a Conservative evening paper as by a Liberal. Indeed, one very clever writer who afterwards served Mr. Greenwood so effectively on

the *Pall Mall Gazette* had just begun his career as a Conservative journalist, and articles which delighted the public during the early seventies might just as well have come out of a Conservative office. However, by that time the *Pall Mall Gazette* itself was really, if not nominally, a Conservative organ, and probably did more to write down Mr. Gladstone's first Administration than any other journal of the day.

But to return to Mr. Disraeli. I have said that his ideas of journalism seemed rather old-fashioned, and I do not think it would ever have occurred to him to found a paper like the *Pall Mall Gazette* or the *Saturday Review*. He often talked to me about it ; proposed that I should be the editor, and even asked me what salary I should expect. I remember that when I threw out as a feeler £500 a year, he corrected me, and said, "Yes, £10 a week." I mention this because it shows that he was thinking of a time when journalists, like actors, reckoned their salaries by the week. They may do so, perhaps, to some extent still. But in the middle of the last century the practice was general, and Mr. Disraeli's thoughts evidently reverted to the system which was in existence when the *Press* was founded. However, the project was dropped. Many of the Conservative leaders had burned their fingers in the *Press*, and declined to make another experiment. And even if they had not, and if the plan had been carried out, though I should have told Mr. Disraeli just what I have said here, I do not suppose for a moment my advice would have been taken.

I remember about this time having a characteristic note from him which may be of some interest in this age of biography, as our own may well be called. I

was asked—I really forget by what publisher—to write a short Life of him ; and I wrote to enquire whether he would like to give me any particulars. His answer was as follows, coupled with some very kind expressions of regard for myself which, however undeserved, serve to illustrate the writer's character and his loyalty to those who had endeavoured in any way to serve him :—

HUGHENDEN,

Nov. 25, 1860.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am not an admirer of contemporary biography, and I dislike to be the subject of it. When I pass through town, which will be in the course of next month, I will, however, see you if you wish it.

I have always been desirous that a gentleman of your talents, acquirements, and character should have the opportunity of bringing them to bear on public opinion in a manner advantageous to the country and beneficial to himself. But no occasion has yet offered itself to me by which I could satisfactorily accomplish this end. You are, however, fortunately yet young, and I hope to see you succeed in life.

Believe me,

Very truly yours,

DISRAELI.

But his dislike of contemporary biography did not prevent him from reading and revising any such short notices of himself as might appear in periodicals.

And perhaps this is the best place to introduce what I remember personally of his attitude at this time towards the Church of England—that is, from 1860 to 1868. It was during this period that he delivered several very eloquent speeches on the Church of England, which were afterwards collected and published separately under the title of “Church and Queen.” The first of them was delivered in November, 1861, at the annual meeting of the Oxford diocesan societies, and in it we find the following allusion to what were known as the

“Palmerstonian Bishops.” “I know,” said Mr. Disraeli, “that recent appointments to high places in the Church, and other public circumstances, in their opinion equally opposed to the spread and spirit of sound Church principles, have made some look without any enthusiasm on the connection between Church and State, and even contemplate without alarm the possible disruption of that union. It is impossible to speak of those who hold these opinions without respect, and I would say even affection, for we all of us to a great degree must share in the sentiments of those who entertain these opinions, though we may not be able to sanction their practical conclusions.”

Some time afterwards, when I wrote in a magazine : “The instincts of race are ineradicable, and while those simple forms of government which have always prevailed in Asia still retain their charm for men of Mr. Disraeli’s blood, so it is equally intelligible that his instincts and traditions and imagination should make him respect a great national hierarchy founded on great mysteries and storied with a solemn grandeur, like its own old abbeys and cathedrals,” he sent word to me to say how much pleased he was with this expression of his views.

All this is quite consistent with what he said to me after the General Election of 1865, when he was again greatly disappointed. During the whole of Lord Palmerston’s Administration he said he had been labouring assiduously to conciliate the Roman Catholic party, who were naturally much displeased with the foreign policy of the Government. He had met, he said, with considerable success, and he mentioned to me several Lancashire families on whose vote and influence he

believed he could depend. A careless, thoughtless speech of Lord Derby's gave deep offence to the Roman Catholics, and shattered all his hopes. Here he did speak with considerable warmth, as he sat up in his armchair and "showed how fields were won," and, alas! how they were lost. The Parliament of 1865, however, was a Palmerstonian Parliament, and contained a numerous and influential section of so-called Liberals who looked with great dislike on the union between Gladstone and Bright in Lord Russell's Cabinet.

I should add that though Mr. Disraeli was, in my opinion, sometimes at fault as to the historical position of the Church of England, his speech at High Wycombe in October, 1862, is one of the best accounts of what the country gains by a National Church, and of what we should lose by disestablishing it, which I have ever met with.

CHAPTER III.

LORD BEACONSFIELD (*continued*).

A Visit to Hughenden—Disraeli's Love of Trees—A Walk with Mrs. Disraeli—A Drive with Disraeli—His Views on the Origin of the Civil War—After-dinner Talk—A Sally which made one of the Guests look Grave.

It was early in October, 1864, that I first received an invitation to Hughenden. Mr. Disraeli had very kindly asked me to come when he had some people staying in the house whom he thought I might like to meet; among them, I remember, was the Duchess of Somerset, the Queen of Love and Beauty at the Eglinton Tournament; but, unfortunately, I could not go on the day fixed, and thus just missed meeting her Grace, who had left the day before I got there.

I remember the journey well—I started from Oxford, and drove in a dogcart to Thame, where I caught a train to High Wycombe. Here I got a fly to take me up to Hughenden. The driver was drunk, and several times nearly upset me. But it was a pitch dark night, and he may not have been so drunk as he looked. Mr. Disraeli, when he heard the story, congratulated me on having had an adventure. I was too late for dinner, but that did not signify, as I had practically dined at Oxford; and after I had dressed I was shown into the drawing-room, where I found Mrs. Disraeli by herself, whom I now saw for the first time. We were soon joined by her husband—and you do not

see such a couple as they made every day in the week. The contrast was striking. It is enough to say that I liked Mrs. Disraeli very much. She was very good-natured; had nothing of the fine lady about her; and I daresay frequently astonished those who had much of it. Later on I was regaled with sandwiches and sherry, Mr. Disraeli assuring me that Hughenden was famous for its sandwiches. I do not know how they were made, but I remember I thought they were particularly good—as good, that is, as it is in the nature of a sandwich to be. The only two guests remaining in the house when I got there were Mr. Lygon, afterwards Lord Beauchamp, and a Buckinghamshire country gentleman, whose name I have forgotten, but who, like Dandie Dinmont, as described by Dominie Sampson, was learned “in that which appertaineth unto flocks and herds,” and was possessed of a fine herd of Alderneys, which occupied a large share of our attention before we went to bed. No smoking-room was mentioned, and we retired early.

When I looked out of my window the next morning I saw Mr. Disraeli walking up and down between his two friends on the terrace which ran along the front of the house, and afforded a pretty view of the little valley of the Wye, from which Wycombe takes its name, and the woods and hills which encircle it. The other side of the house looked out upon the lawn. Mr. Disraeli’s morning costume was a black velvet shooting coat—the very same, perhaps, which he wore when he made his famous speech at the Oxford Diocesan Conference, as described by Mr. Froude; a tall, sugar-loafed hat, with, if I remember right, some kind of feather attached to it; and a dark green tie, a colour

to which he was always partial. I joined them on the terrace as soon as I could, and then Mr. Disraeli told me a great deal about the house and the estate, and the Norris family who had formerly possessed it, and was interested in hearing that many years ago an uncle of my own had once had thoughts of buying it. He forgot to add that the Manor of Hughenden belonged to the Priory of Kenilworth, and that he himself was one of those "gentle proprietors of abbey lands" whom he denounced in "Sybil."

Of course, he knew the whole neighbourhood thoroughly, and seemed to take pleasure in talking about it. He was fond of Buckinghamshire, its woods and waters, for a great love of trees was one of his marked characteristics; and here, perhaps, a highly imaginative person fond of far-fetched resemblances might be reminded of the political differences between Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone, the one a great conservator of trees, the other a great destroyer. Mr. Disraeli was proud, too, of the place which Buckinghamshire filled in history, and of the continuity of its character down to the present time. When asked once where were the four thousand Buckinghamshire freeholders who followed John Hampden, "Why, where you would expect to find them," was the answer, "in Buckinghamshire, to be sure." After breakfast, he took me into his library, and it was a pleasure to see him among his books. He pointed out several scarce volumes, touching each of them as he spoke with a slender forefinger, indicative both of race and of character. He was a scholar, his favourite classics being Sophocles and Horace. But he made little parade of either his scholarship or his literature; and his

conversation did not often turn on books, either ancient or modern.

On quitting the library, he retired to his own den—a small room upstairs, which I was shown on a subsequent visit to Hughenden after Mr. Disraeli's death—and I was left in charge of Mrs. Disraeli, with whom I walked round the garden, and was introduced to the peacocks, the cedar brought direct from Lebanon, and some other plants or trees which came from the Far East. Then we set out for a ramble through the woods, my hostess being attired in a short skirt, with stout gaiters—a costume which has since become comparatively common among ladies, but was new to me at the time. In the month of October the woods are apt to be wet, and, as it was a damp morning, I rather envied her. But her conversation would have made amends had I got twice as wet as I did. “*Namque canebat uti.*” For she told of her first acquaintance with “Dizzy,” as she always called him; of the sums she had spent on electioneering down to that date—I think she said a hundred thousand pounds—and that she was well rewarded by the devotion of so brilliant a husband. She spoke of his position as a country gentleman and his popularity with the farmers and peasantry. He was no sportsman, she said, and kept neither hunters nor pointers—I believe a pair of carriage horses were the whole of his stud. The tenants supplied him with game as he required it, and that much-maligned character, the gamekeeper, was never seen on the estate. Then she showed me the walks which had been cut through the woods, to each of which some fanciful name was given. One was Italy; another, I think—but of this I am not sure—was named after

some Spanish province. Then there was "The Lovers' Walk," and all, as I understood, were planned by Mrs. Disraeli herself, with the approval and sympathy of the statesman. She spoke of his favourite flowers and favourite trees, his love of birds, and of the garden songsters in particular—the thrush, the black-cap, the goldfinch, and the whole tribe of warblers. She showed me, in fact, a side of his character but little understood by the world in general at that time, though since then it has been better appreciated, and, coming fresh from the lips of so clever a woman as his wife, it is easy to understand the deep impression which it made on me. She gave me also anecdotes and illustrations of his great good nature, his kindness to unfriended talent, his fidelity to his friends and magnanimous contempt for his enemies.

My hostess brought me back to luncheon about the usual hour, and after that meal the carriage came round to the door, and Mr. Disraeli took his two other guests and myself for a drive round the neighbourhood. It is full of historic memories, and it is needless to say that our host was steeped in them. It was good to be with the great satirist of the "Venetians" on this, to him, classic ground. It was the home of his childhood, and here he imbibed ideas which never afterwards deserted him. His father, Isaac Disraeli, was living at Bradenham, only a few miles distant, when he was writing his life of Charles I., and ransacked the whole district for facts or traditions relating to the Rebellion and the families concerned in it. But all family papers belonging to that period, said our host, were destroyed at the Restoration. "The conspiracy was hatched in these hills," he said, and whatever evidence of it still

existed in the bosom of the Chilterns was carefully removed when the Stuarts reappeared upon the scene." Our drive took us through a beautiful country, through the lovely beech woods from which Buckinghamshire derives its name, till at last we came to a spot where the hills slope down into a little valley, called Velvet Lawns, the slope being covered with natural boxwood, said to be indigenous to only one other county in England besides Buckinghamshire. Velvet Lawns, he said, at one time was a favourite place for picnics, and even parties came down from London to hold their revels on its turf. But they behaved so badly that leave had to be withdrawn. I remember staring at Mr. Disraeli, and trying to imagine him at a picnic.

Mr. Disraeli talked a good deal about the Civil War, and had evidently persuaded himself that the Chiltern Hills were the cradle of an aristocratic conspiracy, intended by the authors to regain for their own order the power which they had wielded under the Plantagenets. Charles I.'s mistakes gave them the opportunity they wanted. They were the excuse for the Rebellion, but not the cause of it. This already existed. Such was the general tenour of his conversation on this particular subject, to which he had given deep and serious attention independently of the information for which he was indebted to his father. It was impossible to doubt, as you listened to his voice and marked the play of his features, that he was perfectly sincere in this belief. We may take different views of the policy of the Parliamentary party, and of the results of its ultimate victory in 1688, without doubting that Mr. Disraeli's theory of its origin came very near the truth. This was a memorable afternoon,

and I remember what struck me at the time was that Mr. Disraeli, in his sugar-loaf hat and black cloak which he wore in the carriage, resembled anything but a Cavalier.

If I remember rightly, we assembled before dinner in the library, and when dinner was announced Mr. Disraeli led out his wife and left the three of us to follow. The dinner, I recollect, was very good. But Mr. Disraeli talked very little, leaving the lady of the house to lead the conversation. I remember mention being made of Harper Twelvetrees, and Mr. Disraeli seemed really to take a lively interest in counting up the number of names which had been formed from trees. I had the honour of making a remark which attracted his attention on the subject of portrait galleries. I asked him if he had ever noticed, in looking at collections of family portraits, how the general type changed as you passed from the seventeenth century into the eighteenth, the long or oval face predominating in the former becoming the rounder and fatter one most common in the latter. He said he never had, and turned to Mrs. Disraeli to tell her what I had said. The change, I thought, was coincident with the change from claret and sack to port and punch, together with the deeper potations which the Germans made fashionable in England. He seemed to think it might be so; but he pointed out that claret and Burgundy continued to be the drink of the higher classes nearly all through the century, and in support of the assertion he quoted his two favourite heroes, Bolingbroke and Carteret, who both drank Burgundy in large quantities. Yet George I. and Walpole drank punch together till the small hours, and we have all heard of Savage "roaring

for hot punch at five o'clock in the morning." Mr. Disraeli said that men in those days had less fear of mixing their liquors, and that this might be one cause at least of the greater amount of drunkenness.

We did not sit long after dinner. Nor did Mrs. Disraeli remain with us long after we returned to the drawing-room. When she was gone, Mr. Disraeli sat and chatted with us for an hour very pleasantly: told some good stories and said some good things—a joke upon an inn called the King's Arms (at Berkhamstead, I think) is the only one that I remember. Mr. Disraeli said he did not remember the inn, upon which the owner of the Alderneys assured him that he must be mistaken. "You must remember the house, sir: there was a very handsome barmaid there—monstrous fine gal—you must have been in the King's Arms, sir." "Perhaps," said Dizzy, "if I had been in *her* arms I might have remembered it." Mr. Lygon looked grave. But Mrs. Grundy has now retired from the stage, and I think I may repeat the above without giving offence.

CHAPTER IV.

LORD BEACONSFIELD (*continued*).

Disraeli's Views on Parliamentary Reform in General—The Reform Bill of 1867 Carried—Mr. Gladstone's Strategy in 1868—Disraeli's Inadequate Grasp of Church Questions—His Admiration of the Whigs—His Reticence on Questions Affecting the Court—His View of "the Rupert of Debate"—Lady Beaconsfield's Death.

IN 1866 Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli came into office for the third time, and now again a great difference appeared in the Conservative ranks on the question of parliamentary reform. When it became known that the Government meant to introduce a Bill, relying on the support of the Cave, a new daily paper was started, intended as far as possible to represent the views more immediately associated with the Adullamites, but largely shared by members on both sides of the House.

Disraeli's ideas on the subject of parliamentary reform in general can hardly be gathered either from his speeches or his books. Though he was no friend to the Venetian Constitution, he was as little a friend to democracy ; and, looking at the question as a practical statesman, apart from historical speculations, he considered that the English aristocracy had it in their power before 1832 to preserve the best parts of the old Constitution intact. But after 1832, he said, there was no stopping. An arbitrary pecuniary franchise could only be maintained so long as it was not assailed. Not to suggest changes, and to refuse them when they were

demanded, were two totally different things. The Whigs, he once said, taught the English people to eat of the tree of knowledge, and to know that they were naked. The rest followed as a matter of course. Successive requests for more clothing in the shape of franchises had to be granted with discretion. A hungry man must not have too much to eat all at once. It must be given by degrees. But he thought the Conservative Reform Bill of 1867 had done enough for the time. It had satisfied a large section of the population. He knew that more would have to be done. He said that of course the turn of the peasantry would come, almost implying sometimes that it would not be in his own time. Others must carry on the work, which, perhaps, need never have been begun; but as it had been, it would be necessary to go on.

Such was the general impression left on my mind by the few occasions on which I saw him during his third tenure of office. It was now that the *Day* newspaper was started as the organ of the Cave. But it was begun with very insufficient capital, and, though I believe it served its turn, it did not live through the session. I was employed to write the political leaders, and Mr. Disraeli was pleased to say, more out of good nature, I should think, than conviction, that they had helped largely to carry the Bill. I was present at most of the more important debates. I heard several of Mr. Disraeli's finest speeches; and I remember one in particular which was delivered in reply to an amendment moved by Mr. Gladstone, abolishing the distinction between the compound householder—a very prominent personage in those days—and other rate-payers. It was the great trial of strength for the

session, and Mr. Disraeli made some of his happiest hits in it. His answer to Mr. Lowe, who had accused Sir Stafford Northcote of changing his opinions for the sake of place, was peculiarly happy. When Mr. Beresford Hope, whose Dutch-built figure and queer gesticulations many can remember, declaimed against an "Asian mystery," Mr. Disraeli, turning towards him with that peculiar expression on his face and that peculiar turn of voice by which everyone knew that a good thing was coming, said that his honourable friend's style was ornamental, but required practice, and that, as a comment on the "Asian mystery," "the Batavian grace with which it was delivered took all the sting out of it."

When the paper was handed to Mr. Whitmore, the Conservative Whip, a burst of cheering broke from the Conservative ranks. When the numbers were read out—for the amendment, 289, against 310—the hurrahs rose again and again, still louder than before, and all the Tory country gentlemen rose from their seats and rushed to shake hands with the leader who was said to have betrayed them. Many of the younger members pressed Mr. Disraeli to return with them and have supper at the Carlton; but, as Lady Beaconsfield told me afterwards, with manifest pride and joy, "Dizzy came home to me." And she then proceeded to describe the supper: "I had got him a raised pie from Fortnum and Mason's, and a bottle of champagne, and he ate half the pie and drank all the champagne, and then he said, 'Why, my dear, you are more like a mistress than a wife.' " And I could see that she took it as a very high compliment indeed.

Mr. Lowe had been much admired for his use of the

Trojan horse in the debates of 1866. But his reference to Chæroneia in 1867 caused Mr. Disraeli to dub him an "inspired schoolboy." This finished him.

When the Reform Bill was carried, with every prospect of a Conservative majority at the next General Election, Mr. Gladstone played his trump card in the shape of the Irish Church Resolution, which had the effect of changing the issue that was set before the electors at the dissolution of Parliament. As Mr. Disraeli said, the Liberals would never give a Conservative Reform Bill fair play. Neither the Bill of 1859 nor the Bill of 1867 was allowed to appeal to the people on its own merits. On each occasion a fresh issue was suddenly interposed between the public eye and the Reform Act, which prevented the people from giving their whole attention to it and recording their votes exclusively with regard to it. Had they done so, Mr. Gladstone knew well enough that a Ministerial majority would have been returned. In the one case the Franco-Austrian War, in the other the Irish Church, was used to checkmate the enemy. The move was perfectly successful. Mr. Gladstone has been blamed for it, but I think unjustly. According to the party game, as played during the last sixty years, it was perfectly legitimate.

Mr. Gladstone's strategy had a two-fold effect. It forced his adversary to fight in a much less advantageous position than he would otherwise have occupied, and compelled him to seek allies in an antiquated party and obsolete shibboleth, with which he had little real sympathy, and with which the more cultured section of the Church of England had still less. I always thought it very unfortunate that the question on which Mr. Disraeli was obliged to appeal to the country was

the Irish Church. It threw him into the arms of the Orange party, led up to his great mistake about the Public Worship Regulation Bill, and put him out of touch with the great body of Tory High Churchmen, who were his natural allies. All this Mr. Gladstone, no doubt, foresaw. The Church of England, indeed, was not Mr. Disraeli's strong point. He had not studied its history, and did not understand its claims, though of its practical benefits, and of what would result from the loss of it, no man, not even Mr. Gladstone, has spoken with greater force and clearness.

Mr. Disraeli deceived himself about the General Election of 1868. His "arms of precision" speech at the Lord Mayor's dinner in 1868 showed that he over-estimated the strength of the purely Protestant feeling to which he had appealed. These two years, 1867-8, had been a great strain upon him, and I thought when I saw him at the Literary Fund dinner in the last-mentioned year that he looked ghastly. Here he lamented his severance from the "pellucid streams of literature," which, however, he was shortly to have an opportunity of revisiting.

Both before and after that date I had frequent opportunities of conversing with him; and I can only note down in Boswellian fashion a few of the many interesting sayings which I then heard.

Contrary in some respects to what one might have expected, he had a great admiration for the Whigs; not for their statesmanship, but for their courage, consistency, and discipline. He likened them to a solid square, on which throughout the eighteenth century the Cavaliers charged in vain. He more than once repeated Burke's saying—though, by-the-bye, I never could find it in Burke—that the Whigs throughout the whole of

this long period were not supported by a majority of the nation, but held their own by "management"—*i.e.* generalship. I ventured to ask him some questions once about the Peelites and the Court. On this subject he was not very communicative; but he did say, what I have since heard from Whig lips of the purest blood, that the Whig party feared Prince Albert, and thought that if he had lived he might have brought on a collision between the Crown and the Parliament. "Party government is a necessary evil," he said. "Sir Robert Peel was growing tired of it, and if his followers had been willing to join in an attempt to supersede it, with the result of adding power to the Crown, we should have had trouble." Did he think that any form or any measure of personal government was possible with the reformed Parliament? "It is more possible," he said, "with a popular franchise than with a restricted one. Whatever additional power accrued to the Crown would be taken from the aristocracy. They had something to lose by such a change. The people had nothing." These were the diplomatic answers he was in the habit of giving to questions of this nature. He would always avoid giving a direct answer—without seeming to evade the question.

I remember once venturing to ask him whether Lord Derby's famous reply to the great lady who asked him whether one of his newly-appointed colleagues was a real man, of which Mr. Saintsbury only quotes half, was correctly reported. He smiled, and said that Lord Derby, "like many other great men, sometimes liked a coarse jest." I repeated to him what had been told me by a near relation of Lord Derby, namely, that he was rather a vain man than a proud one. "He was

both," was the reply, "but not in politics. His vanity was not flattered by his becoming Prime Minister. He was essentially a timid man." "How did this agree," I said, "with his being the Rupert of debate?" "Oh," he said, "rashness and timidity are closely allied." But he did not think that the comparison of Lord Derby to Rupert was a very happy one. What was called rashness in Lord Derby was often simply carelessness. As an instance of real rashness, he quoted the Duke of Wellington's well-known dictum about reform. That was an uncalled-for attack upon the enemy's position, entangling him in difficulties from which he could never entirely extricate himself.

I did not generally find him willing to talk about his own books—I regarded them rather as forbidden ground. But I did venture to say something to him about Count Mirabel, in "Henrietta Temple," and Lucian Gay in "Coningsby," the one supposed to be a portrait of Count d'Orsay, the other of Theodore Hook. I asked him if he had not intended to make more of Lucian Gay, as the story went on, when he first began. He said, "Wasn't I satisfied with the sheep's tails?"* Thus I got no direct answer, but I always thought that he really did drop Lucian Gay on purpose, through the difficulty of keeping him going at high pressure through three volumes. He said he thought d'Orsay would be satisfied with his portrait if he saw it. The above are some specimens of his mode of parrying questions which he was either unable or unwilling to answer. It was between 1858 and 1873 that I saw the most of him, and most of what is here recorded refers to this period, the fifteen years preceding his

* See "Coningsby," Chapter XI.

advent to real power, during the larger part of which he was necessarily at greater leisure.

In the year 1872 occurred the death of Lady Beaconsfield, and that it was a heavy blow to her husband, nobody who knew them both and had seen them much together could entertain a doubt. Disraeli had his moments of weariness and despondency, which, if his wife ever experienced, she carefully concealed. One might almost say of her what Cicero says of his daughter. While she was alive, wrote the Roman statesman, "he always had in all his troubles *quo confugerem, ubi con- quiescerem; cujus in sermone et suavitate omnes curas dolo- resque deponerem.*" When we read the dedication to "Sybil" one could almost believe that the above words had suggested it. "I would inscribe this work to one whose noble spirit and gentle nature ever prompt her to sympathise with the suffering; to one whose sweet voice has often encouraged, and whose taste and judgment have ever guided its pages; the most severe of critics, but—a perfect wife!" And when he spoke of the days following her death as "the darkest hour of his existence" he certainly felt what he said. She was always cheerful, always brave, and always devoted. And that she did not live to see him attain the goal of his ambition was a melancholy reflection in which he must often have indulged.

There was a little joke between them which I heard from the late Dean of Salisbury. "You know I married you for your money," Disraeli would say to her. "Oh, yes; but if you were to marry me again you'd marry me for love, wouldn't you?" was the regular reply. "Oh, yes!" her husband would exclaim, and the little nuptial comedy ended.

CHAPTER V.

LORD BEACONSFIELD (*continued*).

“Waking Up” (1871)—Opposition to the Ballot—His Vigilance in the House—His Refusal to take Office with a Minority (1873)—His Second Government—The Public Worship Regulation Act—On Personal Government—In the Lords—“Peace with Honour”—Why he did not Dissolve in 1878—His Eastern Policy—Illness and Death.

✓ DURING the Parliamentary debates on the Irish Church and the Irish Land Bill Disraeli was comparatively quiet. But when, in February, 1871, Lord Hartington moved that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the state of West Meath and certain adjoining parts of Meath and King's County, the nature, extent, and effect of a certain unlawful combination and confederacy existing therein, and the best means of suppressing the same, he sprang to his feet with all his usual alacrity and delivered a very telling speech. I was not a reporter, but I was in the Gallery at the time, and the word went round that he was “waking up.” On the 24th, on the Black Sea Conference, he rose to his full height, and it was felt that “Dizzy” was a man again. This was a remarkably able speech, and the manner in which he replied to Mr. Gladstone's frequent interruptions irritated the Prime Minister not a little. When Mr. Gladstone had to rebuke an opponent he was usually solemn and severe, “bursting with moral indignation,” and so forth; Disraeli, with his

hands on his hips, and replying with calm incredulity and ironical civility to whatever contradictions or explanations his adversary might interpose, was a wonderful contrast.

In this speech, too, occurred his memorable description of all that we had done for Ireland at the instance of Mr. Gladstone. "Under his influence we have legalised confiscation, consecrated sacrilege, condoned high treason: we have destroyed churches, and we have emptied gaols." Mr. Froude, who quotes this as an admirable specimen of his sarcastic style, says that "the drawling iteration" with which each particular count of the indictment was uttered produced a marvellous effect. I heard the speech, and I should not have described it in that way. The orator made a slight pause between each article, which greatly heightened its effect. But there was no drawl. Each assertion was delivered with low-toned emphasis—slowly, and with that air of amazement which he knew so well how to assume. But every word was pronounced with special distinctness, and each point was allowed time to produce its full effect before he proceeded to the next.

It was during this first Administration of Mr. Gladstone that the question of the ballot was seriously taken up by the Government, who at first proposed that it should be optional; and Sir William Harcourt was the first to point out the absurdity of the suggestion, since an optional ballot would afford no secrecy whatever. Mr. Disraeli was always opposed to it. "I hate the ballot," he was heard to say in private more than once, as I was informed by Lord Rowton. But the "extinct volcanoes" were doomed. Neither the ballot nor the promised repeal of the income-tax could save Mr.

Gladstone from defeat. Several unfortunate incidents had contributed to swell the bill of indictment against the Ministry. One which Mr. Disraeli took the greatest advantage of was the affair of Sir Spencer Robinson, Controller of the Navy, who, when he applied to Mr. Gladstone for leave to publish a correspondence between himself and Mr. Childers relating to the loss of the *Captain*, was told that he might do so provided he would change the dates. This was too good a point for Mr. Disraeli to pass over. "I have heard many remarkable things," he said, "this session, which promises to be rife with interest. . . . I have heard also this session—and I look upon it as one of the most remarkable things of which I have any recollection—that a functionary who sought to publish a correspondence connected with his department, which he not only believed to be necessary to vindicate his character, but to be of the greatest interest to the country, received permission to do so, provided he changed the dates."

The tone and manner in which he pronounced these last five words baffle description. I can never forget it. Lowering his voice a little, and uttering them very slowly, bending forward slightly at the same time and looking down the House, as was his wont on such occasions, he brought out the full force of the innuendo with galling gravity. Mr. Gladstone, of course, had an answer. But what it was I do not know. He only said, in reply to Mr. Disraeli, that the accusation was "paltry and contemptible," and there, so far as I know, the matter dropped in Parliament. With the outside public, however, Mr. Disraeli's sarcasm had a considerable effect, for the general public did not under-

stand Mr. Gladstone's strange request ; nor does Mr. Morley offer any explanation.

Mr. Disraeli was a formidable antagonist in the House of Commons for very many reasons, one among which was his keen vigilance. Nothing escaped him, and in the great debate on the Irish University Education Bill, in 1873, this quality served him in good stead, and enabled him to wind up the debate with a speech which turned the scale against the Government. Mr. Cardwell had said on a previous night that the Government were ready to make all concessions that were required in a Liberal direction. Many members, however, did not happen to hear what fell from Mr. Gladstone afterwards, just as the House was breaking up. The Prime Minister said that the statement of the Secretary for War only meant that the Government would be perfectly willing to consider certain questions in Committee. Mr. Disraeli's comment on Mr. Gladstone's statement is worth quoting : " I have had rather a long experience of this House. I have seen many important measures brought forward by both sides of the House ; I have heard many objections to those measures. I have heard Ministers promise, and very properly promise, in vindicating the second reading of their Bill, that if the House would only go into Committee all those objections should be fairly discussed. But I have generally seen that when they have gone into Committee not one of these objections has been carried." I did not hear the speech myself. But Disraeli's quickness in catching Mr. Gladstone's words led up to one of the turning points in our Parliamentary history, and settled the fate of the Bill, which marked the first stage in the decline of the old Liberal party.

I did not see much of Mr. Disraeli just about this time, but I was in the House when he gave his explanation of his refusal to take office in March, 1873; and I have a vivid recollection of his tone and manner as he described the situation of a Government taking office in a minority. He spoke from bitter personal experience. "We should have what is called 'fair play.' There would be no wholesale censure, but retail humiliation." (He was thinking of 1852 and 1867.) "In a certain time we should enter into the paradise of abstract resolutions. One day honourable gentlemen cannot withstand the golden opportunity of asking the House to affirm that the income-tax should no longer form one of the features of our Ways and Means. Of course, a proposition of that kind would be scouted by the right honourable gentleman and all of his colleagues; but then they might dine out that day, and the resolution might be carried, as resolutions of that kind have been. Then another honourable gentleman, distinguished for his knowledge of men and things, would move that the Diplomatic Service be abolished. While honourable gentlemen opposite were laughing in their sleeves at the mover, they would vote for the motion in order to put the Government into a minority. For this reason: Why should men, they would say, govern the country who are in a minority? And it would go very hard if, on some sultry afternoon, some honourable member should not 'rush in where angels fear to tread,' and successfully assimilate the borough and the county franchise."

The subject suited him exactly; and, though I have heard Lord Palmerston, Lord Derby, Lord Salisbury, Mr. Lowe, Sir William Harcourt, and Mr. Gladstone

himself, I have never heard Mr. Disraeli's equal in the delivery of a sarcasm. I think Sir W. Harcourt came the nearest to him. But it was *longo intervallo*.

The first year of Mr. Disraeli's Administration which succeeded Mr. Gladstone's in 1874 was marked by the passage of an Act which has made it more famous than many more important events. I mean the Public Worship Regulation Act, which, he said, rather unhappily, was an Act "to put down Ritualism." The phrase stuck to him, and did him an infinity of harm. But a knowledge of the Church of England was not Mr. Disraeli's strong point, as I have already suggested. He was often at the mercy of the last speaker who got his ear. When he led the Young England party, he adopted their views of Church questions, and took his creed from Lord John Manners and his associates. When he had to defend the Irish Church, he took his creed from Lord Cairns. Thus he was thrown into the arms of the Orange party, and lost the allegiance of many of the High Church clergy, who were in those days nearly all Conservatives.

Many of his sayings on the same subject showed that he did not understand the idiosyncrasy of the English clergy as he understood other classes of the community. They did not like his way of putting things. Speaking of "Essays and Reviews," he said that he himself was all for free inquiry, "but by free inquirers." This gave offence not only to the Broad Church party, but also to many High Church Anglicans. Again, his assertion that he "was on the side of the angels" was not much to their taste. These expressions, though they meant nothing more than, perhaps, the same men would have said in other words, rather

jarred on the *ethos*—if I may use the word—of a highly cultivated class, always shrinking from epigram on sacred subjects.

After he took office in 1874, Mr. Disraeli had little leisure for private conversation. One subject, however, which came up at that time he allowed me to discuss with him briefly, and that was “personal government.” It was Baron Stockmar’s “Life of the Prince Consort” which first raised the question. It was taken up by Mr. Goldwin Smith, who never forgave Mr. Disraeli for his portrait of “the Oxford professor” in “Lothair,” or for being designated afterwards by the same eminent humorist as “the wild man of the cloister,” and it was made the subject of an article in the *Nineteenth Century* by Mr. Dunkley, who had already written to the same effect in a provincial journal.

I replied to this article, in the same magazine, a reply which drew from the *Spectator* an admission that the House of Commons was losing ground in public estimation every day, and that the country “might seek in a form of personal power a new source of strength and vigorous control of its affairs.” Lord Beaconsfield was charged with attempting to set up this “personal power,” and with instigating Queen Victoria to join in the conspiracy. The charge was actually repeated by one of his colleagues, who was, however, not at that time a member of the Government. Speaking of Lord Beaconsfield’s relations with the Queen, he said, “He tells her that she can govern like Queen Elizabeth, and she wants no teaching.”

I have already quoted what Lord Beaconsfield said about the greater possibility of a revival of

prerogative under a democratic *régime* than under an aristocratic one. But he also gave me more of his views on the subject for the purpose of my article in the *Nineteenth*. Mr. Dunckley had said, "If the Queen can summon 7,000 Sepoys to Malta, she might land 70,000 at Southampton and destroy our liberties." "The Constitution," said Lord Beaconsfield, "works through a series of understandings, and depends entirely on the moderation and good sense of all parties concerned in it. This," he begged me to observe, "is just the guarantee we have that the Crown will not bring 70,000 Sepoys to Southampton. We have no other security that it may not equally abuse all its other great powers. Mr. Dunckley's argument," he concluded by saying, "is as good in principle against any standing army at all as it is against their particular employment in our Indian standing army." I asked him what he supposed to be meant by the Sovereign standing altogether aloof from party, and whether, in giving his confidence to the Ministers who at any given moment may enjoy the confidence of Parliament, he was to have no political opinion of his own, or to change them at least as often as he changed his Ministers. He answered: if that is the meaning of the Sovereign's neutrality, it would, "to save him from being a political partisan, make him a political infidel."

Aristotle's three democratic characteristics are *ἀγέμεια*, *πνλία*, *βαναυσία* (Pol. vi. 2). Whether the sinking process in Parliament which Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Disraeli, and some of the best thinkers of the day believed to be visible thirty years ago has made any further progress under the influence of these three characteristics I leave to others to determine. Mr.

Disraeli certainly thought that if it went much further a great change would be impending, and that a stronger monarchy would at least be preferable to a Republican dictatorship.

With the development of the Eastern Question and Mr. Disraeli's translation to the House of Lords came a marked change in the man. He held his own among the Peers with great dignity, and one or two of his best speeches were delivered in the Upper House. But the House of Commons was "his natural born element"—it was there that he had his foot upon his native heath: and the Lord Beaconsfield of the House of Lords was necessarily a different personage from the people's "Dizzy," one whom they loved and admired none the less because they did not understand him, and never quite knew what to make of him.

I remember well, when he was still Prime Minister, his reply to a question asked by Lord Granville relative to some occurrence which had attracted public attention. Lord Beaconsfield gave the necessary explanation, and then added, in the gravest manner: "So your lordships will see that there is not one word of truth in the statement which the noble Earl as the Leader of the Opposition in your Lordships' House has very properly made." Lord Granville sat opposite to him, smiling with congenial amusement at all which the tone and manner, the glance and the attitude, of his antagonist implied. I remember, too, in the debate of March 4th, 1881, on the evacuation of Kandahar, how Lord Beaconsfield looked over his shoulder at the cross benches where Lord Derby, who had defended the evacuation, then sat, saying: "My noble friend made a very animated speech—and I do not know that

there is anything which would excite his enthusiasm except when he contemplates the surrender of some national possession," and the "faint, well-bred merriment," to borrow his own words from "Coningsby," which moved the calm countenances of that aristocratic assembly as they recognised the truth of the satire. I heard the short speech which he made on unveiling the statue of Lord Derby at Westminster. Among the company present to witness the ceremony were Mr. R. H. Hutton, Professor Huxley, and Bishop Ellicott. I had the honour of forming one of their group, and, though all three—certainly the two first-named—were very far from being "Dizzyites," they all showed their lively appreciation of one whose genius alone had borne him to the summit of affairs, and whose wit, humour, and courage had made him a popular favourite, in spite of the numerous disadvantages with which he had had to struggle.

When he brought back "Peace with Honour" from Berlin it was not altogether the kind of peace which he would have striven for had he been able to have his own way from the first on the Eastern Question. He would have played a more forward game against Russia had his hands been free. "My colleagues wouldn't let me," he said one day, as he sat rather moodily over the fire. But, nevertheless, July 16th, 1878, was a great day in his life. I witnessed his reception at Charing Cross, and joined in the cheers which greeted him as he drove out of the station. He looked in high health and spirits, and at that moment was probably the most popular and powerful man in her Majesty's dominions. If he had dissolved Parliament at that time, *quum de Teutonico vellet descendere curru*, he would

certainly have died Prime Minister. And I never could learn why he didn't. I had no opportunity of asking him. But it was said the Government were afraid of an appeal to the people because of some temporary irritation resulting from their financial policy. I can't think that Lord Beaconsfield himself would have been deterred by any such consideration. But the Government had been alarmed by the Buckinghamshire election in 1876, when a safe Conservative seat had only been retained by the small majority of 186. Had Lord Beaconsfield been ten years younger, he might perhaps have acted differently. But for the moment, on that July day, now nearly thirty years ago, he stood on a pinnacle of greatness which may perhaps have affected even his cool and sagacious judgment.

It is a mistake, by the way, to suppose that his support of the Turks was due to his Oriental proclivities. His sympathies were all with the Arabs, between whom and the Turks there was no affinity of either race or tradition, of art or literature.

Mr. Froude says that when Lord Beaconsfield returned from Berlin he thought "he had secured the ascendancy of the Conservative party for at least a quarter of a century." If he thought so then he did not think so long. When, in the autumn of 1879, a friend who was about to leave England spoke of seeing him in Downing Street again that time next year, he said, "I think it very doubtful whether we shall be here this time next year."

Since 1878 the tide of his popularity, which was then at flood, had been slowly ebbing; and though he may not have looked forward to defeat as a certainty, he evidently regarded it as a contingency to be reckoned

with. Whether even for his own sake he deeply regretted it is, perhaps, doubtful. His health was broken. He had lived his life. He might say with Dido—

Vixi et quem dederit cursum Fortuna peregi.

His portrait has been unconsciously painted by the great poet of the Victorian age in colours that will never fade. He is an example, if ever there was one, of the man—

Who makes by force his merit known,
And lives to clutch the golden keys,
To mould a mighty State's decrees,
And shape the whisper of the Throne.

Some time during the winter of 1880-81 I met him at a reception given at the house of a well-known Tory hostess. He was not looking ill then. He inquired about my work. I told him of some articles I had been writing for the *Nineteenth Century*, one on the cause of the Conservative defeat, which he said he had read, and agreed with as to the borough constituencies, and also as to the English aristocracy, whom I had likened to the "country gentleman of Palestine" who confided in his wealth and great possessions, and was doomed to such a sudden blow. He said he had noted the comparison, which amused him, and which he thought a fair one, adding only that it was not so appropriate in a period of agricultural depression as it might have been in more prosperous times.

This was the last time I ever saw him. Towards the end of March he caught cold, which brought on an attack of bronchitis, and he never left the house again. Down to the middle of April hopes were entertained of his recovery. But in the third week a sudden change

took place in the weather. The 17th, Easter Sunday, was bitterly cold, with a keen east wind, and the effect on Lord Beaconsfield was immediate. On the following Tuesday, the 19th, I was returning to town from a visit in the Eastern counties. The ground was covered with snow. The air was damp and foggy, and when a friend who got into the same carriage told us of his death it was only what I had expected. The dismal atmosphere accorded better with one's feelings than a sunny spring day would have done. His death was a great grief to myself, to whom he had shown a measure of kindness wholly out of proportion to any service I had rendered him, and it was in his mind before his death to do me a still greater honour, for I was told by Lord Rowton shortly afterwards that Lord Beaconsfield intended his life to be written by Lord Barrington and myself. But as no instructions to that effect were found among his papers, the matter went no further.

CHAPTER VI.

LORD BEACONSFIELD (*concluded*).

His Kindness to Friends—Mr. Montagu Corry—Lord Beaconsfield's Efforts to serve the Author—Not a Dandy in his Later Years—His Popularity with the Farmers and the Peasantry—A Defence of his Sincerity—His Relations with the Author.

LORD BEACONSFIELD was very loyal to all his supporters, down to the humblest, and he had a real sympathy with journalism which forty years ago was not universal among statesmen. When he found that the best or the only way of rewarding Mr. Montagu Corry was by giving him a peerage, there was a difficulty about the insufficiency of Mr. Corry's means to support the dignity. Objections to the grant of a peerage where this insufficiency existed were known to be entertained in the highest quarter ; and there seemed to be only one way of conquering them. The letter written by Lord Beaconsfield to a relation of Mr. Corry, in whose power it was to remove this impediment, was described to me by Sir Philip Rose as one that would "wile the bird off the bough." It had the desired effect ; and the writer's object was immediately secured. Of his friends in the Press he was equally mindful. Mr. Coulton, the editor of the *Press*, of whom I have already spoken, would have been rewarded with a lucrative post had he lived. Unfortunately his death occurred a year before his patron returned to power. Another editor of the same paper, though not of the same calibre,

received a smaller reward. A sub-editor was made Inspector of Factories, and the same official rank was offered to myself. But as it would have taken me away from London, and interrupted the work which had now become the business of my life, I declined it, with, I think, Mr. Disraeli's approval. I was very much interested in political journalism, and having ready access to the Conservative leader, I did not wish to break off the connection.

Another gentleman there was on whose behalf I once spoke to Mr. Disraeli, and received from him the following very interesting and characteristic reply—

Aug. 18, 1873.

DEAR MR. KEBBEL,—My acquaintance with Mr. — was slight, limited I believe to one personal interview. But I endeavoured to assist him in life, and sometimes not without success. When I acceded to office in 1857 [a slip of the pen for 1858] he borrowed of me a not inconsiderable sum, but I never heard from him again, even when at my instance he obtained from Lord Derby the office to which you allude. I do not over appreciate gratitude, nor am I inclined to be at all exacting in such matters, still you will allow me to say that under all the circumstances of the case I think I have done for Mr. — as much as he deserves.

Mr. Disraeli, as I may continue to call him, was always willing to assist me. I have already spoken of the Reform Bill of 1859, and the early information of its details which I received from him. In the following year I wrote an article on him and his career down to that date, of which he corrected the proofs, enriching it at the same time with marginal notes of the greatest interest in his own handwriting, which, it is needless to say, I have carefully preserved. One of these relates to events which have not always been correctly recorded. “The leadership of the House

of Commons was never offered to Mr. Gladstone, though Mr. Disraeli would have been willing to yield it to him in 1850-1. It was offered at Mr. Disraeli's instigation to Lord Palmerston on two occasions."

I had an interview with Mr. Disraeli before writing the article, and when he saw the proof he did me the honour to say that it was "clear and spirited." But he said more than this; and, at the risk of being charged with vanity and egotism, I have ventured to publish the following letters:—

GROSVENOR GATE,

May 2, 1860.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have read your article with much satisfaction. Generally speaking it shows a knowledge of politics which is not usual, and is, therefore, calculated to influence opinion.

Personally speaking, I feel indebted to you for a generous and, I trust, not altogether unjust survey of a difficult career, and I shall not easily forget your effort.

When this article was republished four years afterwards with some others in a volume styled, "Essays on History and Politics," Mr. Disraeli wrote to me again, and again I must apologise for this and further exhibitions of vanity:—

GROSVENOR GATE,

July 11, 1864.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have just written to Lord Beauchamp, who is an invalid and wanted an agreeable companion in his travels to Brighton and about, to take with him your "Essays." I am delighted with them, and I think they will establish your reputation as a sound critic and a graceful writer.

I had other letters from him of an equally flattering character, but I have quoted enough to show the ready kindness and encouragement with which he greeted the early literary efforts of a young man just entering life, without interest or connections, and with little to com-

mend him to the notice of a great statesman except admiration of his genius. What further small services I was able to render him when the Reform Bill of 1867 was on the table have been amply repaid, and to those I have already referred. But I must give one more letter to show not only the sincerity of his friendship, but the warmth of his sympathy when appealed to on a subject which nearly concerned my own future happiness.

At this time, of course, the details of the coming Reform Bill, and Cabinet discussions on the subject, were absorbing his attention, and wearing him with daily anxieties. Yet amidst all this press of affairs he found time to write to me as follows, fully showing that what he said in his letter of 1860 was not empty words—

DOWNING STREET,

Feb. 15, 1867.

DEAR MR. KEBBEL,—I have been, and am, so continuously engaged that it has been quite out of my power to reply to your letter, and I would not address you on such a subject by the hand of another.

The moment I acceded to office, I mentioned your name to two of my colleagues, who, I thought, would have the power and opportunity of forwarding your views, and expressed the strongest feeling on my part that they should be advanced and gratified.

I make no doubt that they will take the earliest occasion to forward my wishes. But, unhappily, I learn from Mr. Corry that my assumption, the foundation of all my efforts, that you could accept professional office and employment, is not warranted, and that I must consider your case as that of one without a profession.

This throws immense difficulties in my way, not to say insurmountable ones—for there is scarcely an office which does not require a professional qualification, but I will watch and do my best for you.*

I have given your book to read to Mr. Corry, and you may communicate with him, either personally or by letter, without reserve. He is almost as anxious to serve you as . . .

One of the colleagues to whom he spoke was Lord Cairns, and I understood that a county court judgeship

* This promise was not unfulfilled.—T. E. K.

might be mine if it suited me to take 'it. But, though called to the Bar, I had never practised, never held a brief, never even sat in court. My friends urged me to accept the offer if it came, and made light of my objection. However, I felt myself wholly unfit for the position, and I believe I was right in not running the risk which would certainly have attended the acceptance of it. All this is nothing to the public, except in so far as it explains Lord Beaconsfield's letter. I should add here that when he spoke to Lord Cairns he did not know that I had never practised at the Bar.

Lord Beaconsfield had once been a dandy, and had lived with the dandies; and how completely he had caught the tone of them may be seen from "Coningsby." But as he advanced on the political stage he left his dandyism behind him. His dress was always in the best taste—black frock coat, grey trousers, and well-fitting shoes on his well-shaped feet. His garments never looked either old or new. And as he walked up the House of Commons with his coat buttoned he looked, men would sometimes say, as if pleased that he had "kept his waist." He stooped a little in his later days, but otherwise he had a very neat figure. I have said that he was not a dandy. But there was one thing about which he was very particular, and that was his wig. When any Conservative member in passing to his seat on the bench just above the front one disturbed the arrangement of his leader's "back hair," there was always a little impatient gesture and a hand hastily raised and passed round to the nape of the neck to repair the disorder if there were any.

His fondness for trees, flowers, and birds I have already touched upon. Besides his favourite primrose,

he loved violets, gardenias, and orchids; and after his death I was shown at Hughenden the spot where stood his favourite ash tree, blown down in a gale during one of those stormy winters which occurred in succession about eight-and-twenty years ago. He grieved over its loss, for, independently of his love for this particular tree, he did not like to see anything destroyed. He could not bear to look upon a dead bird. When I visited Hughenden in the autumn of 1881, in company with Lord Rowton, I was shown all his favourite walks in the woods and by the brook, and I thought he must often, remembering who had once been his companion in all of them, have repeated to himself the lines of Mrs. Hemans, "And by the brook and in the glade Are all our wanderings o'er?" Even in the London parks he could discover bits of sylvan scenery. His own room, in which he did most of his writing, was, if I remember right, a rather low-roofed, oblong room looking out upon the garden; and here he used to work, sometimes on official papers brought down to him from London, sometimes on a novel, till four o'clock, when he always went out for his walk or drive before dinner. What a multitude of memories and associations thronged upon one's mind while sitting in the chair or leaning on the table which had once been his! Everything about the house was much as he had left it, with the exception that the peacocks were no longer there. The Queen herself had taken charge of them.

Though not a typical English country gentleman, for he neither hunted, nor shot, nor even tried to throw a fly upon the trout stream which he loved, he was naturally very popular with both the

farmers and the peasantry. He liked to look in at the cottages and talk to the village matrons at their tea-time; and he has remarked with what perfect good breeding a peasant's wife would receive you. She was never uncertain of her position, an uncertainty, which, he said, was the main cause of awkwardness in Society. This was one of his sayings which I have treasured up. He loved the country and its beech woods, as I have said. He revelled in a warm, bright sun, and once told me he never wondered at the sun-worshippers. But his heart, after all, was in London, in among the throngs of men, or drinking delight of battle with his peers. *Hæ tibi erunt artes.*

A well-known Conservative member and a steady supporter of Mr. Disraeli once said to me that he doubted his sincerity at bottom—not his loyalty or fidelity to the party which he led: he never swerved in his allegiance, and devoted all his great powers without stint to the service of those “to whom he had sold his sword.” I remember Mr. R—— saying this to me as we were walking away one Sunday afternoon from a house where we had both been calling, and where Disraeli had been one of the subjects of conversation. No one, said my friend, could question his honesty or his honour as between himself and his party. But did he really believe in Conservatism? Or had he not chosen his party simply because it afforded the readiest road towards the goal of his ambition?

This estimate of the Conservative leader was not peculiar to my friend. But those who entertained it could not have studied either his character or his writings very deeply. He was an aristocrat of aristocrats. He had no notion of allowing political power to be divorced

from the principle of birth and property. He always spoke of the country gentlemen of England as the natural leaders of the rural population. Both in his speeches and in his writings he loved to dwell on the advantages of what he called "a territorial constitution." And perhaps he did not always make sufficient allowance for the inroads which had been made in it during the fifty years that followed the first Reform Bill. Such, at least, is the impression which his language on the subject has left upon my own mind. His sarcasms at the expense of the English aristocracy were limited to a very small section of them, though often mistaken for contempt of aristocracy in general. There could not be a greater error. He believed himself to possess a pedigree compared with which the pedigrees of the oldest families in Christendom were as things of yesterday.

As for forms of government, his ancestors had lived under a theocracy not very like government by Trafalgar Square. The very charges brought against him of a leaning to personal government, and a desire to exalt the prerogative, all point in the same direction. Whether he had sold his sword to the Conservatives or not, he could never have sold it to the Destructives. If he had been really a Radical there was every opening for him after the Reform Bill. This is too often forgotten. But I must not be led into a long dissertation on Mr. Disraeli's political principles, as I am concerned now rather with my own recollections of him. If I have dwelt too long upon them, or said too much about myself, my excuse must be the pardonable pride and pleasure with which I look back on the intimacy which he allowed and encouraged, and the fact that I

won my own way to his esteem without either influence or introductions.

In the biographies, memoirs, and magazine articles which have been written about him during the last quarter of a century I have seen very little as far as concerns actual personal intercourse with the great statesman which may not be found in my own *Life* of him, written very shortly after his death ; or in my edition of his speeches published by Messrs. Longmans in 1882, which has been drawn upon by other writers, not always with any acknowledgment of the debt. I have endeavoured in these "Memories" to confine myself as much as possible to what I saw and heard with my own eyes and ears during the five-and-twenty years over which my acquaintance with him extended. But for some things I am indebted to members of the House of Commons, and for one or two to the late Duchess of Rutland, whose *Memoir* of his later years was published soon after his death. In his "Little Life" of Lord Beaconsfield Mr. Walter Sichel has mentioned circumstances which have found a place in these reminiscences, but as I had been long acquainted with them I did not conceive myself precluded from recording them here.

As Mr. Froude truly says, he had few intimate friends. He thinks there were but two—his wife and Mrs. Willyams—to whom he was tenderly attached. But I think we may add to the list Lord Rowton, who certainly had a large share of his affection, and fully deserved it. I saw a good deal of Lord Rowton at one time ; and besides his genial good humour, and friendly sympathies, the simplicity and naturalness of his character and his manners were extremely winning.

How well I remember his saying to me when for some reason he had asked my age, "Ah, *I'm* sixty: it's a great bore."

I have said that after Lord Beaconsfield's death I visited Hughenden with Lord Rowton, and it was to assist him in looking through the papers and letters which were left at his discretion. We turned over boxful after boxful, but found nothing of sufficient interest to warrant our making any selection from them, nor did I ever hear from Lord Rowton subsequently that he had found any others. But if others existed, furnishing new materials, either political or personal, they will doubtless be referred to in the more complete biography of Lord Beaconsfield which is now promised us.

I have not been careful to observe any strict chronological order. In "rambling recollections" such as these it is not required—even if it would not, to some extent, impair their interest. All that I have tried to do is to set down as accurately as I could whatever passed in the way of personal intercourse between Lord Beaconsfield and myself, all that I heard of his speeches in Parliament, and whatever I was told by others which has not become common property. But it was impossible to avoid introducing some passages which are already familiar to the public; while in what has been quoted from his speeches in Parliament there are necessarily many more which are now household words.

These reminiscences have been written entirely from memory, except the letters of Mr. Disraeli which I have quoted; and I daresay I have omitted some things which, had I been writing twenty years ago, I might have remembered. But not, I think, many.

It was Mr. Disraeli, in reality, who shaped my life, and his is the principal figure which passes before my eyes as I look back upon it. As he is the only patron I ever had, I cannot compare him with others. But I suppose the "patron," as handed down to us by the eighteenth-century writers, is now extinct, and that no struggling man of letters ever finds him "a native of the rocks." I have fondly imagined my relations with Mr. Disraeli to have resembled in some slight degree Crabbe's relations with Burke. Certainly there was something in his manner, no less than in his actions, to inspire one with affection as well as admiration and gratitude. The kindly interest which he took in my affairs might almost have been called paternal. And it is impossible for me to look back upon him from any such detached point of view as might ensure a more impartial estimate.

Like Johnson, he had "fought his way by his literature and his wit"; nor would all his efforts have availed him in the struggle had not his genius shone through the clouds of detraction which for a time obscured it; and had not the force of his character and the strength of his will compelled all ordinary obstacles to give way before him. That the secession of the Peelites, who stood sulkily aloof, and the death of Lord George Bentinck brought him his opportunity, may be true enough. But all men who rise in the world by their own exertions must wait for their opportunity, and that they were able to seize it when it came is all that can be said of many of the world's heroes. The opportunity offered to Disraeli was the vacancy in a post which had been filled by such men as Wyndham, Pulteney, Fox, Peel, and Russell. Disraeli was equal to the occasion, and that when he had once gained it he held the

position for thirty years, "ever foremost in the fight, face to face with antagonists who were reputed the ablest speakers, the most powerful thinkers whom the country could produce,"* is the best proof that the acceptance of him was no mere temporary make-shift, but that in the fearless orator who always singled out the tallest foeman for attack, the Tory party and the nation at large had found a born leader.

Power came to him too late in life. When he took office in 1874 he was sixty-nine years of age, and more disposed to regard Downing Street as a haven of rest than as a basis for future and more laborious operations. But it is a great mistake to regard his career as a failure. To have rebuilt a great political party after it had been shattered by the defection of its own leader, and to have raised it, in spite of its unpopular antecedents, to such a height of public favour that of the thirty-nine years which followed his great measure the Tories were in power with large majorities for twenty-three, is a feat which, if he had done nothing else, would have entitled his career to be called a great success.

I conclude these memories of Lord Beaconsfield with an extract from a letter written to me by Lord Rowton in 1886, which will show, I hope, that I have not been guilty of presumption in claiming to possess some knowledge of the great statesman's character and principles :—

31, HILL STREET,
Jan. 14, 1886.

DEAR MR. KEBBEL,— . . . It is now nearly twenty years since my dear old friend told me to read something of yours as the work of one who "understood him," as there were not many such at that time.

Very truly yours,
ROWTON.

* Froude.

CHAPTER VII.

SOME OTHER TORY STATESMEN.

The Late Duke of Rutland—Belvoir Castle and the Squirearchy—A Survival of Eighteenth-century Toryism—"Young England"—A Visit to the Castle—In the Belvoir Kennels—The Duchess's Stories of the Imperial Court—The Late Lord Carnarvon: A Day at Highclere.

THE late Duke of Rutland, better known perhaps as Lord John Manners, was one of Lord Beaconsfield's earliest friends; and as Belvoir Castle was the head of the Tory interest in the county of Leicester, the clergy and gentry who dwelt within its borders, being nearly all of them Tories, were necessarily much interested in all the sayings and doings of the Manners family. I remember being taken to Leicester to hear Lord John speak at a public meeting when I was quite a child, and I marvelled in my own mind how anyone who had such a difficulty in expressing himself should venture to speak in public at all. I soon, however, got to know the reason why; and Lord John Manners himself, who was then a neophyte and evidently highly nervous, gradually improved, till he became in time one of the most effective debaters in the House of Commons, though he was never an orator and made no pretence to the higher flights of eloquence. In those days Belvoir Castle was kept up in great style, and the county was entertained there with liberal hospitality. My father, who was Vicar of Wistow, then owned by Sir Henry Halford,

accompanied that famous physician to Belvoir—I think about the year 1835, or 1836, when Lord John Manners was a youth of seventeen—and he amused us all with his account of the manner in which his young lordship had shown him over the castle. He had been assured beforehand that it would be necessary for him to take his manservant with him to wait outside his door, as there were no bells in the bedrooms. The man, a middle-aged respectable servant of the old stamp, who had been with us for years, was not accustomed to the ways of great houses, and being out of livery was, of course, placed with the upper servants, the gentlemen's gentlemen, who drank claret and Burgundy, beverages not at all to the taste of our unfortunate domestic, who made very wry faces when he spoke of it afterwards.

Notwithstanding the general popularity of the Belvoir family, and the respect with which they were regarded as the leaders of the county Society, and the heads of a great political connection, there was, I have heard, not infrequently some slight degree of friction between the "Castle interest," as it was called, and the minor gentry or squirearchy of the county. This was a survival of the old Toryism of the eighteenth century, when the majority of the provincial nobility, though still calling themselves Tories, were reconciled to the Court and offered little opposition to the Government. But "the wealthy country gentlemen of England," says Sir Walter Scott, "a rank which retained with much of ancient manners and primitive integrity a great proportion of obstinate and unyielding prejudice, stood aloof in haughty and sullen opposition, and cast many a look of mingled regret and hope to

Bois le Duc, Avignon, and Italy." It is well known how tenaciously a sentiment of this kind will hold its ground long after the cause which originally gave birth to it is forgotten. This was the case in Leicestershire. At least, so I was assured in the middle of the last century by an old Tory politician who took an active part in county elections, and had a large practice as a doctor among the class referred to ; so that he had every opportunity of observing such traces of the ancient jealousy as still lingered among them. This moribund tradition which, though all significance had departed from it, was still alive in the last generation seems to me one of the most interesting old Tory memories which I am able to recall. It connects us so closely with the past ; with the days when, very possibly, Sir Charles Halford, the ancestor of our own squire, as he walked among his deer at Wistow, may have indulged in the same hopes and regrets as Sir Everard at Waverley Honour.

When I first began to hear people talk about Lord John Manners, "Young England" was on everyone's tongue, both in political and social circles. Lord John himself had entered the House of Commons in 1841, being then in his twenty-third year ; and in the following autumn he joined Mr. Disraeli and the Hon. George Smythe in a tour through the manufacturing districts, that they might judge for themselves of the condition of the factory population, which had some years before been brought under the notice of the public by Mr. Sadler, the Tory member for Newark, and author of the first Factory Bill ever introduced into the House of Commons. It was referred to a Select Committee, and, says Mr. Spencer Walpole, the evidence taken

before it "revealed a state of misery which even Sadler had not disclosed." Sadler had no seat in the Reformed Parliament. But the factory question was taken up by Lord Ashley, who, though unsuccessful himself, made such an impression on Parliament and the public that Lord Althorp, the Leader of the House, brought in and passed the first Factory Bill which was ever placed upon the Statute Book. The younger Tories, however, were by no means satisfied that enough had been done, and hence the tour of inspection which I have just described.

In "Coningsby," Lord John Manners, as all the world knows, figures as Lord Henry Sidney, and he was always regarded, even more than Disraeli himself, as embodying in his own person the true ideal of Young England. How this was at first ridiculed is a matter of history. Lord John's poetry was, of course, made fun of. Veteran politicians treated the Young England party as so many children. *Punch* ridiculed their white waistcoats. But it would be a great mistake to found our estimate of the Young England party on what was said of it at the time by critics, either grave or gay, who had special reasons for abusing it.

The *Morning Chronicle* and the *Times* both did justice to the ability of these young men, and were very severe on Sir Robert Peel for attempting to put them down with that official hauteur for which he was, perhaps, a little too remarkable. Time has shown that on some points they were in the right and Sir Robert in the wrong, notably on the question of factory legislation. It was not, however, with the condition of the manufacturing poor that Lord John Manners principally concerned himself in Parliament, though always

voting with Lord Ashley. It was in the peasantry of England that he took the deepest and most constant interest; and he was always to be found in the front when measures for the relief or advancement of the agricultural labourer were in hand. In debates on waste lands, enclosures, allotments, and the like he always took part, and it is interesting to find the names of all the chief of the Young England party in the minority who supported Mr. Walter's motion for the reform of the then Poor Law in 1843—Cochrane, Disraeli, Lord J. Manners, and the Hon. George Smythe.

At a later period Lord John had his revenge on his detractors. When Lord John Russell, in the House of Commons, twitted him with his lines about our old nobility, he replied, "I would rather have written these verses, foolish as they may be, than be the man to remind me of them now."

In 1864 I sent a copy of an essay of mine to Lord John Manners, and had a very polite note in reply. But I did not see much of him till after his accession to the dukedom in 1888. I heard him speak several times in the House of Commons, and Mr. Leycester, who was then the chief of the *Times* staff in the Gallery, used to say, in common with other reporters, that he was the last of the debaters, meaning that few men were left who could rise in the middle of a long debate, and answer the previous speakers point by point without digressing into other matters or propounding counter theories of their own.

It was in the year 1888 that, being asked to undertake a Life of the poet Crabbe, I wrote to the Duke of Rutland, as he had then become, to ask him if any traditions relating to the poet were still preserved at

Belvoir, where he had spent some time as chaplain to the fourth Duke of Rutland, Pitt's great friend, a man of high ability and literary culture, quite capable of conversing with Crabbe on questions of art and poetry. Crabbe had afterwards held the living of Muston, a village in the neighbourhood, which I was anxious to visit. The answer was a kind invitation to come down to Belvoir from Friday to Monday and hear whatever there was to be told.

It is needless to say that I accepted the invitation at once; but, being unable to get away on Friday, I was obliged to get off as early as I could on Saturday morning after a night's work at the office. I arrived at the Castle about two o'clock, if I remember aright, and was received by the Duchess who, had I been able to go down the previous evening, would have driven me over to Muston herself that morning, and very probably would have been able to tell me many things which, as it was, I missed. She was otherwise engaged, however, in the afternoon; and after luncheon a groom drove me over to Muston with a note of introduction to the resident clergyman. Here I picked up a great deal of novel and interesting information about the poet, which I embodied in my short biography. But the Duke himself did not seem to have heard much about him.

On my return to the Castle, it was time to dress for dinner. The party consisted, besides the Duke and Duchess, of Lord and Lady Granby, Mr. Norman (the Castle chaplain), and Lord Cecil and Lord William Manners. The two younger sisters, Lady Victoria and Lady Elisabeth Manners, I did not see till next morning. I remember that I narrowly escaped committing

a gross breach of etiquette when dinner was announced. But luckily no one observed it. I was standing next to Lady Granby, and I don't think we were either of us speaking at the moment, when the Duke, who was sitting at the other end of the room, came up to us, just as dinner was announced, and said to me, "Let me introduce you to my daughter-in-law, Lady Granby." Now, it had never entered into my head that I could be intended to take Lady Granby into dinner; yet the Duke's introduction at that particular moment, when a move was being made towards the dining-room, looked so much like it, that in another second of time I should have offered her ladyship my arm. But the momentary hesitation saved me. Before I could perpetrate so dreadful a blunder the Duke took Lady Granby himself, which, of course, was what he had all along intended. *Sic me servavit Apollo*. For the Duke in his youth might have sat for the god. He was eminently handsome, and I knew an old lady, a connection of my own, who was fond of reminding us that when a young girl of twenty she had once danced with him.

At breakfast next morning Lord Cecil, I think, complained that there was nothing hot, and declared that he had had no breakfast since he came to Belvoir. The Duchess admitted that it was very disgraceful, but recommended her son to have some gruel at eleven o'clock. As there was an excellent pigeon pie on the sideboard, and other cold viands as well, I did not pity that young nobleman so deeply as I otherwise might have done.

The interval between chapel and luncheon I spent with Lord William, who undertook to show me over the Castle just as his father had shown my own father over

it fifty years before. Billy, as he was called in the family, was the youngest son—her Benjamin, the Duchess called him—and the next morning, when he went back to school at Wellington College, I travelled up to town with him and Lord Granby, who had been Lord Salisbury's private secretary. Lord Granby contrasted his Chief with Gladstone, who would have liked to show himself at the window of the carriage and bow to somebody at every station where the train stopped. He said he never could get Lord Salisbury to show himself at all. Even if there was a crowd on the platform expecting him, it was with great difficulty that he could be persuaded to recognise them.

In the afternoon, Lord Cecil had asked me if I should like to see the kennels, to which I, of course, said yes. We went down accordingly, and I soon found myself in the middle of a pack of hounds said to be the handsomest in England, whose attentions were rather more demonstrative than pleasant. When somebody mentioned in Lady Victoria's presence the common belief that if the huntsman or whipper-in went into the kennels without his red coat the hounds would fly at him, the little lady, then about twelve years old, entered a most vigorous protest against the libel on her favourites. "No, no," she exclaimed, and when told by her governess, I think, that she was a little too emphatic, she only repeated her negation with still greater energy than before: "No, no, no, no, no!" Her young ladyship, I believe, even at this early age was sometimes deputed to show visitors over the Castle, and doubtless she was quite equal to the occasion.

The hounds, however, when I was among them, were perfectly good-tempered, though I ran some risk

of being knocked down by their caresses, which is always rather a perilous situation ; and when Lord Cecil and Mr. Gillard, the huntsman, had gone away and left me alone with them, I was not altogether quite so much at my ease as I could have wished to be. One hound in particular—who, I had been told, was a very savage dog—sat upon a stone by himself at a little distance, and took no part in the somewhat boisterous welcome accorded me by his fellows. However, to have shown any signs of uneasiness might have been risky, and I continued to pat and talk familiarly to all the animals, who approached me as if they were old friends, and being a great lover of dogs, I was able to make them understand me. But I don't much desire another such quarter of an hour. The hunt was kept up at that time at its full strength ; there were sixty-two couples of hounds and eighty hunters. But there were only three gamekeepers for the whole of the large property adjoining the Castle, though, as Lord Cecil assured me, there was always abundance of game.

In the evening the Duchess invited myself and some others of the party, I forget which, to sit beside her on the sofa, while she amused us with an account of her visit to Berlin, whither she had gone with the Duke in attendance on Queen Victoria in the preceding April. She drew some graphic pictures of the etiquette of the Imperial Court. Following the royal party into dinner, the ladies and gentlemen went in single file, the ladies first, and not arm-in-arm. She did not think very highly of the Imperial cuisine, and said they were all served with stale fish. The Duke saw a good deal of Prince Bismarck, who thought him an excellent representative of the English aristocracy. This going

to Berlin occurred almost immediately after the death of his brother, whom he succeeded in the title and estates. At Belvoir he did not keep up any great state or large retinue of servants, and though my stay was so short I had time to remark on the same pleasant air of the country, the same easy and familiar, and yet dignified and graceful, courtesy pervading life at the Castle which Disraeli has described in "Coningsby."

Later on, I often saw the Duke in London both at Cumberland Gate and afterwards at Campden Hill. It was at Cumberland Gate that I first saw Lady Katharine Manners, a very pretty girl, then about five-and-twenty. The last time I met her she was receiving the guests at a garden party at Campden Hill, seated under a large tree, a dainty vision which I still love to recall.

The Duke very kindly assisted me with any political information of which I stood in need, and his remarks on agricultural questions, on small holdings and allotments, which his father was the first to introduce into Leicestershire, were always valuable. The condition of the peasantry, as I have said, had interested him even more than that of the factory population. And there is no reason to doubt that the views ascribed to Lord Henry Sidney in that famous after-dinner conversation in "Coningsby" represent very fairly what the late Duke really felt upon the same subject. Though the family politics down to Mr. Pitt's time had been Whig, none knew better than the late Duke that the old Tory party and the peasantry had throughout the eighteenth century been close allies. The line between tenant farmers and labourers was not so strictly drawn as it has been since, and both were generally included

under the head of peasantry. They were almost universally staunch Churchmen, and loyal to their landlords. The yeoman class, the small freeholders, were equally attached to their old rural and ecclesiastical constitutions. And in his sympathies with the whole body, Lord John Manners was identifying himself with the best type of English Toryism. As a High Churchman, his sympathies were with Keble and Pusey, and Dr. Routh and Jones of Nayland and William Law, rather than with the more advanced school, which in time acquired the name of Ritualists. In fact, if anyone had wished to describe the best type of Tory in George II.'s time, he could not have done better than take the Duke of Rutland for his model, though the family politics at that date were Whig. A gracious and genial gentleman, clinging, as far as possible, to the kindly feudal relations between the lords of the soil and the cultivators, whom it was their duty and privilege to protect; a generous and disinterested statesman; a man of culture and refinement; true to the Caroline tradition of Anglicanism and to the principles of constitutional monarchy, he exhibited almost all the notes of that great national creed which the Tories held when they were at once the leaders of the people, the supporters of the Crown, and the champions of the Church.

He lived into days which must to him have seemed very evil days. Authority, property, liberty, all the constituent elements of an orderly and well-balanced state, derided, threatened, or abandoned; the very class in whom he had always taken the warmest interest turning against his own order, and the Ministers of the Crown no longer caring to uphold the claims of

that religious faith of which the Sovereign is the sworn defender. We may be thankful for his sake that he was not spared to see the ruin of the British Empire and the descent of this ancient kingdom to a lower rank among the nations. Toryism has fought hard in the past, and will fight hard in the future to prevent such a catastrophe. The end no man can foresee. But it may be that the greatness of England will some day become only another Tory memory.

Among other Tory statesmen with whom it has been my good fortune to become acquainted, the late Lord Carnarvon was the one whom I knew best. I shall describe a day at Highclere as a companion picture to the day at Hughenden and the day at Belvoir. It was in the month of July, 1884, that Lord Carnarvon was kind enough to invite me to stay at Highclere from Saturday to Monday. I shared with Sir Henry Howorth a fly from the station, which brought us to the house between five and six o'clock. We were received by Lady Winifred Herbert (now Lady Burghclere), and presently Lady Carnarvon came in from the garden in a light summer dress and garden hat. She was Lord Carnarvon's second wife, and then about eight-and-twenty. I could have echoed the words of Burke in which he describes his first vision of Marie Antoinette. But her personal beauty was perhaps the least of her charms. At dinner I had the honour to take in Lady Winifred, whom I found to be a very clever girl, highly cultivated, and well read in modern literature. Our conversation turned chiefly upon books, and I found that her knowledge of French and German literature far exceeded my own.

After dinner I had some political talk with Lord

Carnarvon, who had lately read some essays of mine on Tory administration from 1783 to 1881, and he seemed to like best those on Sir Robert Peel, agreeing with what I said about the vote of 1846 which turned Sir Robert out of office. It was a repetition, I remarked, of the Tory mistake of 1830, when the Tories turned out Peel and Wellington in return for their having carried the Roman Catholic Emancipation Bill: two triumphs of revenge over prudence which the successful party soon had good reason to regret. I quoted the lines from Virgil, which were not in my original essay:

Turno tempus erit multo quum optaverit emptum
Intactum Pallanta, et quum spolia ista diemque
Oderit

And he capped them promptly with:

Non me, quicumque es, inulto
Victor, nec longum lætabere.

Both the Tories after 1830 and the Conservatives after 1846 paid the penalty of their blunders by a long exclusion from power, thus leaving the way open to a long train of Liberal or Radical legislation fatal to their own principles. Lord Carnarvon thought that the Tories had been wrong on both occasions. But this was not the universal opinion; and even so moderate and dispassionate a Conservative as the fifteenth Earl of Derby seemed inclined, during a conversation which I once had with him, to defend the conduct of the Protectionists. At all events, whatever the effect upon the party, he thought it served Sir R. Peel quite right, and that it was a good lesson for public men to learn, namely, that "a man could not do that sort of thing twice."

On Sunday morning Lord and Lady Carnarvon, with some others of the party, including myself, walked down to the village church, which was rebuilt by Lord Carnarvon in 1870. After lunch some of the party strolled down to a prettily-situated lake surrounded by rhododendrons, which lay on the north side of the park. At one end of it stood a picturesque fishing cottage, originally built in the sixteenth century, and often lent to their friends, Lady Carnarvon said, for honeymoons. It was an ideal spot, certainly, for two very devoted lovers, and the water by moonlight must have inspired the dullest of mankind with a touch of romance. I walked from the Castle with the Countess, and found her a most charming companion, gay and lively, but ready at the same time to talk on subjects in which she supposed I was interested. I think she spoke of the Poor Law, and was in favour of outdoor relief.

Both she herself and Lord Carnarvon, of course, knew all about the two battles of Newbury which were fought in the immediate neighbourhood, and at one of which a former Earl of Carnarvon, a staunch Cavalier, was killed. It was want of proper communications, combined with the rashness and folly of some of the younger Cavalier officers, which robbed the King of victory on both occasions, as on many others during the Civil War. They despised their enemy too much, and, like Lord Evandale at Drumclog, brought on a battle before proper dispositions had been made for it. A portrait of the Earl who fell at Newbury hung in the dining-room. He was a Dormer, and the estate came to the Herberts through intermarriage with the Pembroke family.

I saw Lord Carnarvon several times after this at

his house in Portman Square. He was a Tory and, like the Duke of Rutland, a High Churchman. But he was altogether a different kind of man. The Duke was like a simple country gentleman. Lord Carnarvon partook somewhat of the temperament and tastes of Mr. Gladstone. He was a scholar, and to some extent a man of letters. At Oxford he took a first-class in classics and he translated *Æschylus* and *Horace*. I could not find out that he was either a sportsman or a naturalist. He was a man of fine taste and ready sympathy, and naturally rather given to ideals. And it may be that these very virtues affected to some degree the quality of his statesmanship.

I had to return to town that evening, and took my leave with great reluctance, just as the whole party set out for the kitchen-garden to eat gooseberries from the bush.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOME OTHER TORY STATESMEN (*concluded*).

The Late Lord Salisbury—Sir Stafford Northcote (Lord Iddesleigh)—Lord Derby (the Fourteenth Earl)—The Late Lord Beauchamp—Lord Onslow—Some Canvassing Experiences—Mr. Brodrick—Lord Balfour of Burleigh—Lord Randolph Churchill—Cecil Raikes and his Estimate of Lord Beaconsfield—Lord Brabourne—Grant-Duff—Mr. Balfour.

WITH the late Lord Salisbury I was never on very intimate terms. But we had been contemporaries at Oxford, and some of my closest friends became friends of his through taking an active part in the Union debates, in which Lord Robert Cecil, as he was then, gave earnest of his future eminence. I saw him several times after he became a political leader, and he often spoke of his old friends. He rendered me a great service by looking over my essays, and also my *Selected Speeches of Lord Beaconsfield*. Some of the letters he wrote to me on the subject will perhaps interest the public at the present moment. The following relates, first of all, to the famous scene in 1862, when "the favourite bolted"—*i.e.* when Mr. Walpole, to Mr. Disraeli's great disgust, withdrew a hostile resolution on Lord Palmerston's making it a Cabinet question; and secondly, to the Reform Bill of 1867. I had prefixed an explanatory note to each of the speeches, ranging from a few lines to more than a page, and on some of these notes he made remarks which possess

some historical value. In a letter dated Château Cecil, October 3rd, 1881, after referring me to Sir Stafford Northcote for further information, he went on to say :

Two small corrections on questions of fact in the notes may be worth making. In sheet 142 (June 4, '62) it is said at the end : " This was the conviction of Lord Derby, by whose advice Mr. Walpole was acting."

You may have good evidence of this statement, but, unless you have, I should be disposed to doubt it. All the gossip I heard at the time would lead me to believe that Mr. Walpole was not acting in consonance with the wishes of [the then] Lord Derby.

The note in sheet 157 on Reform Bill seems to imply that before the Resolutions were agreed upon and proposed to Parliament the Cabinet had discussed, and had found itself unable to agree upon, the Reform Bill which was ultimately brought in and passed. This was not the case. At the time the resolutions were proposed there was no Bill before the Cabinet ; and no definite proposition of the suffrage had been placed before them. When the Queen's Speech was delivered the Resolutions had been agreed upon in Cabinet, and nothing else had been even proposed to the Cabinet. It is matter of little importance. but I noted it merely as a matter of fact. The Resolutions disappeared so rapidly that nobody guessed the importance which the Cabinet originally attributed to them, or the labour which it cost to draw them up.

When it became necessary to shorten my selections, I asked Lord Salisbury which of the speeches he thought might be omitted with the least injury to the whole. In reply to this question, he sent me the following answer, dated Hatfield House, January 1st, 1882. It is interesting as a Salisbury criticism of Beaconsfield.

DEAR MR. KEBBEL,—I have been through the speeches, which I send back. The two I should leave out, if I left out any, are the second Royal Titles speech (" Whitaker") and that delivered on February 5, 1880, which is not a speech of much importance. I have noted two or three points. It was Lord Carnarvon—not Lord Bath (" noble Earl," not " noble Marquis")—whom Lord Beaconsfield was answering on the use of the word " rectification" in the Afghan speech of 1878.

In the Candahar speech last spring, in speaking of the subject which alone moved Lord Derby's enthusiasm, according to my recollection he said, "Surrender of national *possessions*," not policy.

I have ventured to query the quotation of the *Spectator's* opinion of Lord B.'s Afghan speech. It is open to the same criticism as his own reference to "Whitaker" and the little girl of twelve in the Royal Titles speech. It may be worth while to look back to Lord Granville's speech on his death last May. An incident relating to the Candahar speech is there related which might be worth preserving. The speech which he made at Berlin was in English, and made an extraordinary effect. His speeches at Slough and Aylesbury are worth looking through. I remember one on Lord Ellenborough's despatch, at Slough in 1858, and another on the Church at Aylesbury, which were remarkable.

Of the speeches of which he suggested the omission, a brief notice may be looked for. The speech on the Royal Titles Bill to which Lord Salisbury referred was delivered on March 23rd, 1876, and in it Mr. Disraeli quoted the evidence of a little girl who told her father she had found the title "Empress of India" in her geography book, which was forwarded by her parent to the Prime Minister. He also informed the House that a Nonconformist minister had found the title in Whitaker's Almanack. This was stigmatised in the House as "miserable frivolity and drivelling," and Lord Salisbury himself does not seem to have a much better opinion of it. I have read over the Afghan speech of December, 1878, so highly praised by the *Spectator*, and I confess I do not see anything in it which should provoke such language as some have applied to the Royal Titles speech.

Lord Salisbury's statement concerning Lord Derby and Mr. Walpole in 1862 is specially interesting, because Lord Malmesbury undoubtedly leads one to believe that there was a distinct understanding between Lord

Derby and Lord Palmerston to the effect that the Conservatives would do nothing to turn the latter out—not, at least, with the help of the Radicals, and they could not have done it without. If Lord Derby had advised Mr. Walpole to act as he did, that would have accorded with Lord Malmesbury's Diary. But as we now learn on high authority that he did not, we can only conclude with Lord Salisbury that Lord Derby had only undertaken not to initiate any hostile movement, still less to accept Radical support; not that he pledged himself to keep Lord Palmerston in office under any circumstances. It has always seemed to me a pity that Lord Derby and Lord Palmerston could not manage to act together. They had been members of the same Government for seven years. Both were averse to further Parliamentary reform, and further Radical legislation, and both should have known that nothing but a combination of Whig and Conservative could prevent it.

Before quitting the subject of the Selected Speeches, I hope I shall not be too sharply censured if I subjoin Lord Salisbury's testimony to my Preface:—

DEAR MR. KEBBEL,—I return the Preface. I can suggest no amendment to it. It is exceedingly effective and appropriate.

Besides this correspondence on Lord Beaconsfield's speeches I had some interesting conversations with Lord Salisbury on another subject which has been growing in importance during the last forty years, and by the middle of the last quarter of the nineteenth century had been brought into great prominence by Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Jesse Collings—I mean the question of small holdings, peasant farming, and peasant

proprietors. Lord Salisbury approved of the system in theory, but saw one great difficulty in reducing it to practice. He did not think, indeed, that in England, at all events, it would be a commercial success even if it were possible to adopt it. But he thought its moral effect might be valuable, and he would not go so far as to say that it could never be wise to sacrifice economic principles to great moral considerations. He added, however, that the great majority of English landowners were not in a position to adopt the system of *la petite culture* on a large scale, and make it the rule instead of the exception in English agriculture. If large farms were cut up into small ones there would be new homesteads and farm buildings to be erected on every estate, while at the same time the rents paid by these small tenants would be far more precarious than the income derived from men of capital and skill.*

In accordance with Lord Salisbury's suggestion, I communicated with Sir Stafford Northcote, who wrote me the following note relative to the Canada Corn Bill, introduced by Lord Stanley when he held the office of Colonial Secretary in the Administration of 1841. Lord Stanley's one principle, says Mr. Saintsbury ("Queen's Prime Ministers"), was "protection against foreign, but not against colonial industry." In the discussion on the above Bill, Lord Stanley recommended Sir Robert Peel to adopt Free Trade with the Colonies and Protection against the rest of the world. Commenting on my repetition of this statement, Sir Stafford, at that time Lord

* I understand that at the present time the Board of Agriculture is prepared to lend money for this purpose.

Iddesleigh and President of the Board of Trade, wrote as follows :—

Sept. 14, 1885.

MY DEAR SIR,—I remember the Canada Corn Bill very well. But I doubt whether the idea of establishing Free Trade with the Colonies and Protection as against foreign nations could even then have been carried into effect. It would be still more difficult now. But this is one of the questions which must sooner or later come up for very careful examination.

I have quoted this letter chiefly for the sake of the last sentence contained in it.

In looking over my edition of the speeches, Sir Stafford recommended me to leave out the speech of March 17th, 1845, in which Disraeli compared Sir Robert Peel's treatment of the landed interest to the treatment of his cast-off mistress by the gentleman who had got tired of her. It was of no avail, said the speaker, for the country gentlemen to remonstrate. "When the beloved object has ceased to charm, it is in vain to appeal to the feelings. You know that is true. Almost every gentleman has gone through it. My honourable friends reproach the right honourable gentleman. The right honourable gentleman does what he can to keep them quiet. He sometimes takes refuge in arrogant silence, and sometimes he treats them with haughty frigidity ; and if they knew anything of human nature they would take the hint and shut their mouths. But they won't, and what then happens ? What happens in such cases ? The right honourable gentleman, being compelled to interfere, sends down his valet, who says in the genteel manner, 'We can have no whining here.'"

This was the speech which Sir Stafford Northcote, writing forty years afterwards, advised me to omit. The valet was Sidney Herbert, and, says Sir

Stafford, the expression "gave great personal offence, and has not even now been forgotten." But I could not find it in my heart to leave it out. The comparison might not be in the best taste, and the sarcasm lighted on one of the most honourable and popular men in the House of Commons. But it is so exactly true to life, and hits off the situation so precisely, it is such an excellent instance of the daring audacity which distinguished its renowned author, that I felt that in any collection of his speeches it must find a place.

Lord Derby himself (the fourteenth Earl) I never met. But I knew that fine old Tory, Admiral Hornby, who told me a good story about him, which, although it has been already published, will bear repeating. After resigning office in December, 1852, he ran down to Knowsley like a boy escaped from school. He immediately had recourse to his gun, and during a day's rabbit shooting gave vent to his feelings in the following characteristic manner. "Ha!" he would cry, as a rabbit crossed the ride, "there goes Gladstone; hope I haven't missed him. There, do you see that big fellow? That is Graham. He'll be none the worse for a few pellets in his ribs," and so on through the rest. I once told this to his son, the fifteenth Earl, who laughed heartily at it. He said he had never heard the story, but that it was exactly like his father.

The late Lord Beauchamp, the Mr. Lygon whom I met at Hughenden, and the father of the present Earl, was one of those Tories who greatly approved of the Derby-Disraeli Reform Bill, and that on its merits, and not merely as a stroke of strategy. I once breakfasted with him in Belgrave Square, when I remember he said

of that measure, which was as much Lord Derby's as Disraeli's, that it was "a fine thing for the country." At that time the "Conservative working man" was very much in evidence. And many good judges thought that he had come to stay. I confess I was always more or less doubtful on this point. But the last word has not been spoken on the subject yet.

Lord Beauchamp asked me down to Madresfield more than once; but, unhappily, I was unable to go. He was anxious that I should write the history of Queen Anne's reign. To the conduct of the Tory party at that time he said justice had never been done, and it was a debt which required to be paid, "only," he added, with a smile, "don't tell Lord Stanhope it was I who said so." If I remember aright, Lord Beauchamp referred more particularly to the Church party, of whom Lord Nottingham was the head; and it is too often forgotten that then, as now, there was a remnant of the old Commonwealth group who openly avowed that their object was to overthrow the Church again as the Roundheads and Presbyterians had overthrown her before. This excuse for the severe measures passed by Queen Anne's last ministry for the better security of the Church has never, I think, been properly set out.

Of the Reform Bill of 1832 I remember Mr. W. E. Forster saying to me, when I met him once at Lady Jeune's, that probably the agricultural labourers would all vote Liberal at the first General Election which was just coming on; but that after that they would very likely be found on the Conservative side. This was a true prophecy. At the four next elections after 1832 they voted heavily for the Conservatives. Whether they are destined to find out that the fly with which the hook

was baited on the fifth occasion is as purely artificial as three acres and a cow remains to be seen.

With Lord Onslow I have had a good deal of correspondence on a subject in which he is much interested—namely, the condition of the peasantry, allotments and small holdings. The last time I saw him to speak to was, I think, in 1895, when the friends of the Tory candidate for Paddington were arranging their canvass. A ladies' meeting for the same purpose had been held just before by Lady Jeune at her house in Harley Street, when both she and her sister, Lady Tweeddale, addressed the company. I had a district assigned me, and I explored it with a lady companion from house to house. But I found most of the small tradesmen and householders very indifferent to great public questions, and absorbed in their own immediate interests, for which nobody can blame them. The taxation of ground rents, I remember, was the great question with most of them. I found among them a profound disbelief in all party promises: one party, they said, was just the same as the other. You got nothing from either when once they had secured themselves in power. Which way the men who thought in this manner were prepared to vote I was unable to discover. I got no pledges from any of them; a general feeling of discontent and distrust seemed to permeate the atmosphere. I suppose in this frame of mind they would be more likely to vote Liberal than Conservative, and still more likely to vote against the Government than for it.

An amusing illustration of what such men expect from a change of Ministers was afforded me on a previous occasion by a small greengrocer. This man had no

grievances, never mentioned ground rents, and was, in fact, and always had been, a Conservative. Yet what did he say when I told him I supposed he was going to vote for the Tory candidate in support of the existing Government? "Well, sir, I don't know. I think a leetle change always does good everywhere." "What?" I said, "a change from those who agree with you to those who differ, and would upset all that you value and believe in?" "Well, sir, I often think as a leetle change is good." And this was all I could get out of him. Another man who was prepared to vote Liberal because his neighbours did, or from some other equally cogent reason, declined to believe what the Liberals themselves said. When I selected from their programme some projected attack on any law, custom, or institution which the man himself really valued, all he could say was, "Oh, sir, I ca'an't think that."

Another man, a farmer, gave an equally interesting reason for supporting the Conservatives. He couldn't stand the peace party, he said. Here were our soldiers "eating their heads off." They ought to have work to do. This comparison of soldiers during a long peace to hunters during a long frost, made in all seriousness, was, I thought, eminently characteristic of that combination of common-sense and stupidity nowhere found in such perfection as among the lower middle class. Another man told me that his reason for voting against the Tory Government was that "they were going on anyhow."

Lord Onslow's book, first published twenty years ago, entitled "Landlords and Allotments, or the History and Present Condition of the Allotment System,"

should be in great demand when we are threatened with still further legislation on a question with which Parliament has already interfered too much.

I myself have contributed my mite towards the controversy, and have published tables of agricultural wages, perquisites, etc., drawn from between twenty and thirty representative counties. Sir Matthew Ridley, afterwards Lord Ridley, the late Lord Stanhope, and other landlords were kind enough to help me in the matter, and in the fourth edition, published in February, 1907, statistics are brought down to date. In talking with Lord Stanhope five or six years ago on the same question in connection with Small Holdings, I found that on his estate, at all events, the Ground Game Act had not been followed by the same consequences as have given it such a bad name in other parts of England where hares have almost disappeared. He told me that at their last big shoot at Chevening they got eighty hares—which he thought very good.

While on the subject of shooting, I may mention Mr. St. John Brodrick, whose acquaintance I made at a shooting party in Surrey not very far from Peper Harrow. I was introduced to him by our host, and we very soon fell into political conversation. He was then Parliamentary Secretary to the War Office, and I thought more of having a talk with him than of the business of the day. Mr. Brodrick seemed quite willing to oblige me, but not so the old gamekeeper. He peremptorily demanded that "them two gentlemen should be separated," and to the great amusement of our genial host, John Coles, at once marched us off in different directions. As at the time we were only walking from

one beat to another, our talking could have done no harm ; but it might have seemed, and probably did in the keeper's eyes, to betray a frivolous indifference to the serious pursuit in which we were engaged, like talking in church, or cutting jokes at whist.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh also calls up some humorous memories. He has often given me useful political information, and on one occasion I sat next him at the dinner of the Cecil Club, and found him a most amusing neighbour. I remember his describing a comic incident which happened, I think, in his own house,* and in which Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone were the chief figures. The statesman and his wife were going upstairs from the hall. In the hall two or three housemaids were peeping round the corner to get a sight of the great man, and when Mrs. Gladstone saw them she called down to her husband, " Bow, William, bow," which accordingly he did with his usual affability.

I met Lord Randolph Churchill twice at Lady Jeune's, once at dinner and once at luncheon. At dinner he sat next our hostess, and I sat next to him. A good deal of political chaff was exchanged among us. Lord Randolph at that time either was, or professed to be, a Tory of the Tories, with no leaning towards " concession to the spirit of the age " and " all that sort of thing." Lady Jeune thought he was too strict, and when she professed to think some relaxation of pure Toryism was necessary we dubbed her a Canningite, a title which she laughingly accepted. All this was in fun, for of Toryism rightly understood Canning was a faithful representative. On the second occasion mentioned I had a much longer talk with Lord Randolph.

* Of this, however, I am not sure.

After luncheon I sat by him in the drawing-room discussing the politics of the day for nearly two hours. At this time I think he was leader of the Fourth Party, and the impression which he made upon me was that he was the right man in the right place ; that is to say, that if we were to have a fourth party at all, he was a fit man to be at the head of it. He was eminently a fighting man, but whether he was of that stuff of which statesmen of the first class are made I could not make up my mind on so short an acquaintance. He talked very frankly, and no doubt at that time a more vigorous and spirited demonstration from the front Opposition Bench could have turned out the Government. The Kilmainham compact and the death of Gordon combined should have brought any Ministry to the ground. Lord Randolph and his friends, therefore, had a good case, and no doubt he himself felt that on the Front Bench he could have made better use of it. He had just those qualities which make a man popular both in the House of Commons and on the platform—aggressive audacity, a fluent delivery, and a species of humour which, if not of the highest order, was well suited to his style. He had many of Lord Beaconsfield's gifts, and his career in some few particulars resembled his. But I doubt if he had the *divinæ particula auræ* which just makes the difference between the extremely clever man and the man of genius. However, many men certainly inferior to Lord Randolph have been Prime Ministers.

As I dip into my memory other names come rising to the surface, all of whom were connected in one way or another with the Tory party. Cecil Raikes I knew well. He was Postmaster-General in Lord Salisbury's

second Administration, and was always ready to assist a political journalist with advice or information. He was one of those Tories who, while warm admirers and loyal supporters of Lord Beaconsfield, were inclined to regard him rather as a soldier of fortune.* It would be an insult to Lord Beaconsfield's memory to compare him with Dugald Dalgetty, who, before joining either Cavalier or Roundhead, desired to know firstly "on which side his services would be in most honourable request ; and, secondly, whilk is a corollary of the first, by whilk party they are most likely to be most gratefully requited." Yet if Lord Beaconsfield was really a soldier of fortune it is with such men that we must rank him. Now, we must remember that when Lord Beaconsfield first entered Parliament in 1837 as a supporter of Sir Robert Peel, the Whigs were more in need of support than the Tories. Sir James Graham and Mr. Stanley had carried their biting tongues and their brilliant wit to the Conservative camp. Mr. Gladstone was the hope and the pride of the younger generation of Tories. In Lord Lincoln, Sidney Herbert, and Mr. Cardwell, Peel had most able lieutenants. And had Disraeli chosen to offer his sword to the Whigs, he would have been welcomed and rewarded.

On the other hand, as he himself often said, the Jew is naturally a Tory, though ill-treatment had made him a Liberal. All Disraeli's proclivities lay in the direction of Toryism, and though no doubt personally he had more in common with Lord Palmerston than with Sir Robert Peel, yet as Palmerston acted with the Whigs, and supported their principles and traditions, which Disraeli abhorred, he could only have joined their ranks

* See *ante*, p. 65.

from purely selfish motives, which are not necessary to explain his alliance with the Tories. All this I often said to Raikes. But the opposite idea had taken possession of his mind, and Lord Beaconsfield, almost to the last, continued to pay the penalty of his early connection with the Radicals, although he had demonstrated over and over again that he was only actuated by hostility to the Whigs, and not at all by any love of Radical or revolutionary measures. But the prejudice so created died hard, or rather did not die at all ; and Raikes, I think, remained imbued with it all the time I knew him. I have heard him say, too, that he really thought Lord Salisbury an abler man than Lord Beaconsfield.

Another Minister who began as a Tory, changed into a Whig, and reverted to his original form in the latter part of his life was Knatchbull-Hugessen, afterwards Lord Brabourne, Under-Secretary for the Colonies in Mr. Gladstone's first Administration. I knew him at Oxford when, like Lord Robert Cecil, he was a star at the Union. In those days he was a hot Tory and Protectionist, and as I knew several of his Union friends, I often met him at their wine parties, and used to hear them talk of going down to the Union if it were a debate night, as if it were the House of Commons. He was a very handsome man, and a popular though not a powerful speaker. He married a Miss Southwell, the sister of one of my well beloved college contemporaries, Marcus Southwell of Exeter, whose other sister married Dimsdale of Corpus, afterwards Baron Dimsdale, a well-known figure in the House of Commons, and an intimate friend of mine to the day of his death. The two sisters were both pretty girls, and came up to Oxford at Com-

memoration, where they won the hearts of two conspicuous Oxford Tories, and they well deserve a place in Tory memories.

Sir Mountstuart Grant-Duff was not a Tory Minister, nor a Tory at all. But I cannot omit mention of him, as our acquaintance dated from Oxford days. He, too, was a light at the Union, principally on foreign politics. He had travelled more than most undergraduates in those days, and had "heard the war-drum throb in the vineyards of Pesth." He was Under-Secretary of State for India and afterwards for the Colonies. I often met him in London Society, and we always had a genial talk. We differed, of course, in politics. But on one thing we always agreed. We had a mutual friend at Oxford in George David Boyle, who died Dean of Salisbury. The first question asked by one or other of us as often as we met was, "Have you seen Boyle lately?" to which the invariable answer would be, after "Yes" or "No," as might happen, "How is it he is not a bishop yet? Nature clearly meant him for one." He was a tall, handsome, stately man with a nameless episcopal air about him, and Grant-Duff and myself had always agreed that Nature would be much wronged if Boyle were not promoted to the Bench.

The reader may be surprised that I have said nothing as yet of Mr. Balfour. The reason is partly that my acquaintance with him is of later date, partly that the political conversations in which he was kind enough to indulge me related to events and individuals which can only be touched upon in these pages with considerable reserve. Before he became Prime Minister, and indeed ever since I have been engaged on political

work which made it necessary that from time to time I should receive some assistance from headquarters, by Mr. Balfour such assistance has been always most readily and most kindly given. One thing he told me some three years ago, I think, which has received abundant illustration since. I remember asking him, *à propos* of some Government Bill which the Opposition were very hotly contesting—I think it was the Defaulting Authorities Bill—why he had not used the closure more frequently, as the factious and obstructive tactics with which the measure was encountered would have abundantly justified recourse to it. He said he did not wish to furnish too many precedents for the employment of a weapon which would be sure to be turned against the Unionists whenever their opponents came in. It would not be very long before they did, he thought; and then he was sure they would bring in some most “disastrous measures.” They *have* brought in most disastrous measures, and they *have* made unsparing use of the guillotine. Mr. Balfour’s moderation did not avail him. The Radicals couldn’t have used it with greater severity if he had given them double the number of precedents. But I was struck by the tone of his remarks. He seemed to think that the Unionists had outstayed their welcome; and if he did not foresee such an overwhelming majority as the Radicals finally secured, it was pretty clear to me that he foresaw a Unionist defeat. He evidently believed that the English people were tired of hearing Aristides called just.

On a later occasion, after the Fiscal question had come to the front, he spoke briefly about the state of the party. He seemed much depressed, not at the prospect

of losing office, for that seemed far from unwelcome to him, but rather at the conduct of friends and colleagues whose defection it was easy to see had caused him much pain. But he said next to nothing, and it was only by a word dropped casually here and there that I obtained a glimpse into the state of his mind. However, that is all past and gone. Adversity has reunited those who found that, large as the Unionist party might be, there was no room in it for dissension. We should probably have had a Liberal Government in office if the Fiscal question never had arisen, but not with the enormous majority which it now commands. Dissenters, Free Traders, and Socialists, swelling the ranks of the regular Liberal party, formed a combination too powerful to be resisted; but Mr. Balfour saw through the game in a moment. He saw that the Government, while obliged to be civil to all groups in turn, were really bound hand and foot to the Dissenters; and that behind all the inextricable complications of the Education Bill, lay one single and consistent purpose: the destruction of the Church of England—not perhaps really desired by the occupants of the Ministerial coach, but openly and honestly proclaimed as the one object of their exertions by those who have their shoulders to the wheel.

CHAPTER IX.

TORY MEMBERS I HAVE KNOWN.

Baron Dimsdale—Origin of the Title—The Baron as a Party Man—A Stolid Audience—Convivial Electioneering—Lord Glamis and the Memory of William III.—An Elegant Metaphor—Baron Dimsdale and his Tenants—Mr. Albert Pell—A Retort upon Lord Curzon—Pell's Views on the Poor Law—Sewell Read—Sir George Baden-Powell—The Education Bill of 1902—Mr. Balfour's Frankness.

ONE of my most intimate friends among Tory members of the House of Commons was Baron Dimsdale, member first of all for Hertford, and after 1885 for the Herts division of that county. He was a son of the fourth baron, whose ancestor had received this title from the Empress Catherine of Russia, 1762. The Dimsdales were an old county family, but the first baron was a physician famous for his treatment of small-pox; and he was sent for by the Empress to inoculate her for that terrible disease. He went, as one may say, with a rope round his neck, for what would have happened to him had the Empress died under his hands it is not difficult to guess. Even as it was, his life was in danger from the jealousy and hostility inspired by a foreigner being summoned to her bedside; and the Empress knew it, for she enjoined him to depart secretly, and had relays of post horses placed in readiness for him all along the road till he got beyond the Russian frontier. He was rewarded with a title, a large sum of money, and costly furs, which in Russia only the royal family were allowed to wear.

All this I heard at different times from my friend's lips, and I had plenty of time ; for we were contemporaries at Oxford, though not at the same college. He was a gentleman commoner of Corpus, and prepared himself for the House of Commons like so many others of the same standing—Cecil, Knatchbull-Hugessen, Ward Hunt, Portal, Sclater-Booth (afterwards Lord Basing), and others—by assiduous attendance at the Union. Dimsdale rather cultivated a florid style of speaking, and affected—it was certainly not natural to him—a slightly pompous delivery. His chief delights at Oxford were oratory and hospitality. His little dinners at “The Cross” were well known to a select few ; and afterwards in London he exercised the same noble virtue with generous frequency. Sometimes he invited his friends to Verey's, sometimes to the Old Blue Posts in Cork Street, which was almost the last of the old taverns frequented by *bons vivants*, and was famous for its beef-steaks and its old port wine at 16s. a bottle : a fitting house for the symposium of fine old Tories such as gathered round Dimsdale's table. He continued this practice all his life. I have once or twice dined with him at the Oxford and Cambridge Club ; but after he became a member of the Carlton, we always dined at some tavern or restaurant. He could not ask strangers to dinner at the Carlton. But he gave them such refreshments as were lawful, and I have a vivid recollection of sitting with him on the ottoman in the middle of the hall at that club, each of us with a large glass of foaming brandy-and-soda in his hand, the admired of all beholders.

He entered the House of Commons as member for Hertford in 1866, when that borough returned two

members. After the Reform Bill of 1867 it returned only one, and Baron Dimsdale gave up his seat to Mr. Balfour. He re-entered the House, however, as member for the Hertford division of the county in 1885, a seat he retained till 1892, when he retired from public life. He was missed by his own party, and perhaps by many others. "You always saw his broad back," said Mr. Pell, "in front of you, going into the right Lobby." He was a devout party man, and indeed party loyalty was with him a species of religion. All the manoeuvres by which either votes or seats are won were familiar to him, and in his eyes the end justified the means, no matter what they were. He told me once that one Saturday night at Hertford he cleared off the whole remaining stock of the principal fishmonger; and he used to speak with admiration of a nobleman famous for his electioneering tactics, "who loved a job for its own sake." While he was in Parliament I used to hear a good deal more of the inner life of that assembly than I have heard since. I believe that his anecdotes chiefly bore reference to the subject of intoxication, of which, as it is now obsolete among our respectable representatives, no more need be said.

I helped Dimsdale, or was supposed to help him, in his canvassing in 1885. I know I had to make two speeches to political meetings, and if they did anybody any good, I should be surprised and delighted to hear it. This was the first election in which the peasantry had votes, and I had an object lesson which I am not likely to forget. After dining with Dimsdale and one of his sons at Hitchin, we drove out to Luton, where a meeting of labourers was to be held, I suppose in the schoolroom. We—the upper three—sat on a

raised platform, and looked down upon a sea of white smock frocks and of upturned faces, neither of which moved a muscle or so much as winked throughout the whole proceedings. The listeners, if they did listen, were most quiet and orderly, partly it may be, because they did not understand a single word of what was said ; and I know I kept thinking all the time of Tennyson's Northern Farmer and the Parson's sermon : " I niver knawed what a meaned," etc. When my turn came to speak, I felt I might as well be addressing myself to empty benches as to full ones. The men stared straight before them, and gave no sign of intelligence whatever. It was disheartening, and yet I daresay I was quite wrong. All who know the English agricultural labourer well are aware that of all the undemonstrative human beings who ever existed, he is perhaps the most so, if we except a small class who are at the top of the social ladder of which he is at the bottom. Extremes meet in this respect as in many others. They may all the time have been considering in their own minds nice distinctions, deep political problems, and the great blessings of the existing British Constitution. But they did not look as if they were. And I cannot pretend that it was a stimulating meeting to speak to : I could only console myself with the reflection that Toryism is not an emotional creed.

We drove back to Hitchin, where a sumptuous supper had been provided for us—soup, fish, roast pheasants, champagne, and cigars, and whisky-and-water to wind up with, so that it was nearly one o'clock in the morning before we got to bed. If all canvassing were like this, I thought I shouldn't so much mind a good deal more of it. The speaking was a bore, no

doubt ; but there was balm in Gilead whenever Dimsdale was at hand.

Another electioneering banquet took place either at Hertford or at Hitchin, I am not certain which, and again I had to stand up and say something. Now, as public speaking is not my strong point, and I never can get through it without a feeling that I must be boring my audience even more than I am boring myself, the sacrifice I made in the cause of friendship may be imagined. However, one can't go on eating a man's dinners, drinking his wine, and shooting his game without making him some kind of return ; and I thought, and think still, that these little oratorical contributions of which he seemed to think so much were a cheap price to pay for the many pleasures for which I was indebted to him.

At this last-mentioned dinner I sat next to Lord Glamis, the eldest son of Lord Strathmore, who related to me an incident which I hope he will not mind my mentioning again. He said that when serving with his regiment in Ireland, he was invited to a public dinner, where, of course, the glorious and immortal memory of William III. was duly proposed. "Now," said Lord Glamis, "what was I to do ? Our family had always been on the other side. I could not possibly drink that toast," so I think he said that though he stood up with the rest in honour of the deliverer, like Naaman in the House of Rimmon, and raised his glass to his lips, he put it down untasted. I was much interested in this curious Jacobite survival. It was something, I thought, to have caught across the gulf of centuries the lingering fragrance of the White Rose.

Dimsdale's love of speaking often drew him into

those debating societies of which many existed in those days and do perhaps still in various quarters of the town. In Fleet Street there was the Temple Forum, and in the immediate vicinity Cogers' Hall. Then there was another, I fancy, a little further west. I'm not sure that it did not meet in the hall of one of the minor inns—Lyon's Inn, perhaps. But I went there with Dimsdale in his younger days, when he spoke to a very Radical audience in a strain of superfine Toryism, which galled one honest gentleman so much that he described the offender as one who "grovelled in his own slime." This elegant metaphor, so far from offending the orator who had provoked it, amused him so much that whenever debating clubs were mentioned he always asked if we didn't remember the evening when So-and-so said—speaking very slowly with his chin a little tucked in—that "I grovelled in my own slime." It was not for want of practice that Dimsdale didn't make a greater figure as a debater in Parliament. But his voice was not strong, and I think he only cared to speak when he had got up a subject for himself.

I stayed with him two or three times at Essendon, when he showed me all the presents the Empress of Russia had given his ancestor, costly furs, among them that of the black fox, worn only by the Imperial family. The baroness, as just mentioned, was the sister of my old Oxford friend, Marcus Southwell. The Miss Dimsdales were there, and the eldest son, then, I think, at Eton. The family had possessed Essendon for some generations. They were an offshoot from a knightly family in Essex, and there was no considerable estate immediately round the house, but the baron had other property just where the three counties of Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire,

and Essex meet. Here he used to come down sometimes and stay with his agent, and dine with his tenants. There was one old fellow, I remember, who always wore white cord breeches and was quite one of the old school. I dined at his house with the baron and his son, and another Tory farmer, also the baron's tenant, whose Toryism did not rest on quite so firm a basis as his landlord's. Our host gave us a capital dinner, and any amount of port wine afterwards, under the influence of which we discussed the whole round of political questions of the day and the Irish Church in particular. We all made speeches, two or three apiece ; but whether we succeeded in persuading the wavering farmer to take our view of Irish Disestablishment I rather doubt.

The baron himself was no sportsman, and while the rest of us were shooting he amused himself by making a round of his farmhouses, and lunching substantially at each. Those were the days before the agricultural depression began, when the farmers were prosperous and jolly, and they liked a landlord like Dimsdale, who could make himself at home with them. In the bad years since those days, I am sorry to say that some of those who entertained us so hospitably came to grief. Mr. Arch, too, and his agents have been busy in that part of the country, and Toryism, I fear, no longer stands where it did.

Some other electioneering experiences on the Tory side I had previously enjoyed in my own native county, Leicestershire. Mr. Albert Pell, who sat for South Leicestershire, now the Harborough Division, from 1868 to 1885, was an old friend of ours, and in the autumn of 1867, when Mr. Packe retired, Mr. Pell came forward in his place. After a sharp

contest he was defeated by Tertius Paget, a Leicester banker with great influence in the county. But at the General Election of 1868 Lord Curzon and Mr. Pell were returned, the latter just beating Paget by the narrow majority of 25. Mr. Pell had married the only daughter of Sir Henry Halford, who sat for the county from 1832 to 1857, when he was succeeded by Lord Curzon, who kept the seat till the death of his father, Lord Howe, in 1870, when he was replaced by Mr. Heygate. After their marriage Mr. and Mrs. Pell lived for a time at Guilsborough, in Northamptonshire, and moved afterwards to Hazelbeach House, near Maidwell, and about half-way between Northampton and Harborough. Here I visited him on two occasions, in October, 1867, and again in November or December, 1868. Pell himself was a farmer, and occupied one of the Wistow farms for several years. He was an excellent agricultural representative and retained the confidence of the Leicestershire farmers up to the last. Even in 1880, when, as I heard a farmer say afterwards at the Farmers' Club, they wished to frighten the landlords a little bit, Pell kept his seat, though Paget was returned at the head of the poll and Heygate was dismissed.

We had great fun over the election of 1868. At that time I was staying at Hazelbeach, and a party was made up to drive over to Lutterworth, where the two Conservative candidates, Lord Curzon and Mr. Pell, were to address a public meeting. Mrs. Pell and her sister-in-law, Mrs. John Halford, Lady Isham from Lamport, John Halford, and myself made up the party, and as soon as we got out of the carriage at Lutterworth we commenced to make our way on foot to the

market-place, where the two orators were to address the people from a cart. As we walked along the streets, the three ladies in front, and John Halford and myself behind, we certainly didn't court the popularity of the mob. The streets were, of course, rather crowded, and wherever there was an open space on the walls invitations to vote for Pell and Curzon, or else for Paget, who was fighting for the seat which he won the year before, were posted up in chalk. The ladies, as they walked along, freely rubbed out every inscription in favour of Paget, regardless of the black looks which they encountered from some, or the remonstrances audibly addressed to them by others. A group of half a dozen roughs slouched along in the middle of the street a yard or two behind, and gave vent to their feelings by declaring that "some folks 'ud go to prison if they did that." But they confined their indignation to words, and we reached the platform uninjured. The careless confidence and smiling faces of the three offenders, unable to conceive the possibility of anybody venturing to molest them, and regarding the whole thing as an excellent joke, had perhaps the effect upon the bystanders which such an attitude generally produces. It has its effect upon bulls and dogs, and if the "souters" at Lutterworth meditated any further demonstrations they wisely forbore, and reserved themselves for the speeches, when they could shout to their hearts' content.

After Mr. Pell had spoken, Lord Curzon addressed himself to a subject which he no doubt thought would come home to their feelings very closely. It was the time of the cattle plague, and the agricultural interest was pressing for restrictions on importation. Lord Curzon drew a gloomy picture of what would happen if

a Liberal Government came in, which would certainly refuse all such precautions, leaving the disease to spread till our herds of cattle were decimated. "That is what you have to expect," said his lordship, "and then you'll none of you get any more roast beef and plum pudding on Sundays." "Oi don't get nun, even nyow," cried one from the crowd in a strong Leicestershire accent, amid the inextinguishable roars of all who heard him. He was evidently the local wag. He was in his shirt-sleeves, with his arms up to the elbow thrust under a large leather apron. Whether he was a cobbler or a blacksmith I could not quite determine; most likely he was the former, for by the operation of some law hitherto undiscovered by philosophers, cobblers are more prone to politics than blacksmiths.

We drove back to Hazelbeach to dinner; and I spent a pleasant evening talking over old times with Mrs. Pell. The next day I was introduced to her cats, of which she had a great number of a very choice breed. Most of them were chained up in a row of little kennels, and they had become almost as famous as Dandie Dinmont's terriers. In all parts of the country, if you noticed a very long-haired grey cat, as likely as not you would be told that it came from Hazelbeach. She realised high prices for some of them.

I remember other election scenes in the same neighbourhood. There was a bye-election in South Leicestershire in 1870, when Lord Curzon succeeded to the peerage, and party spirit ran very high. The contest lay between Heygate (Tory), and Paget (Liberal), the former being returned by a majority of seven hundred. The mob were very violent. A relation of mine drove voters into Lutterworth from the

neighbouring villages, and some scenes occurred worthy of being described by Lever. I remember their carrying an old bedridden clergyman to the poll. At first he refused to go—no wonder!—but at length, having huddled on some clothes, he consented to be carried downstairs and placed in the carriage. My enterprising relative drove up to the polling place at full gallop, scattering the crowd in all directions amid a storm of yells and hisses. However, they got their man out in safety; and while the driver remained upon the box pelted with mud and other missiles, the owner of the vehicle and a farmer friend who came with them made a bridge with their backs for the parson, while another friend led him by the hand to record his vote. They then drove him home and brought some more back, and it all finished up with a big fight in the evening, when the mob tried to storm the Hind Hotel, where the Tories were refreshing themselves after their exertions. They were beaten off by the besieged, though not without considerable difficulty, for the assailants were very savage, and many heavy blows were given and taken. Of the two gentlemen who carried the parson on their backs one had several teeth knocked out, while the other had a nose swollen to the size of a Jargonelle pear. The coachman got a black eye. An unoffending “blue” gentleman who was looking out at the scene from his own doorway was gently tapped on the proboscis by an indignant “green” with a fist like a cricket ball, and sent back into the interior with anguish on his countenance.

The Tories, where deficient in numbers, sometimes made up for it in wit. I remember very well that some malignant “blue” circulated the following anecdote

at the expense of the rival candidate, tending to show the narrow range of theological learning to be expected from the "greens." A candidate at a public meeting, in the course of being heckled by his hearers, was asked—so ran the story—whether he would vote for the revision of the Decalogue. Not knowing in the least what the Decalogue was, he whispered for information to the Chairman, who was just as ignorant as himself. However, something had to be said, so he told the perplexed orator that he believed it had something to do either with the Cattle Plague or else with flogging in the Army—he wasn't sure which. Whereupon the now well-informed speaker turned to his interrogator, and assured him that he would vote not only for the revision of the Decalogue, but for its total abolition.

Before returning from this digression, I may remark that it was not all at once that the ten-pounders reconciled themselves to the enforcement of the law against bribery and corruption. In many places it was commonly believed that your vote was your property, which you were at liberty to dispose of to the greatest advantage. I remember a report that a voter—I think at St. Albans—brought an action against the member for the sum to which he considered himself entitled. This, however, is probably a myth. But the following amusing instance of the pertinacity with which the old class of voters clung to their electoral traditions was given me by a Yorkshire friend, who was Chairman of the Conservative Committee for some Yorkshire borough before 1867. The Committee had given out that they were firmly resolved to discontinue all such proceedings as were known to be illegal, and which had recently caused more than one important

borough to be disfranchised. But the voters did not take it seriously. They thought the declaration was only a dodge to deceive their opponents. Acting upon this conviction, one day, when the Committee were sitting, a local canvasser came into the room and whispered to the Chairman: "There's a man below, sir, has got a cow to sell; what do you think?" "Go along," said the Chairman; "haven't you been told that nothing of the kind was to be done at this election?" The emissary retired, but was soon followed by another, who likewise whispered in the Chairman's ear: "There's a man downstairs, sir, has got a cottage to let; what do you think?" This disciple of jobbery was also promptly ejected with a severe rebuke. But it was long before the fact was fully realised that the Committee were in earnest, and the Chairman was again asked more than once "what he thought" about some equally nefarious transaction.

But let nobody suppose that the suppression of direct bribery was the triumph of pure honesty. There are many ways of influencing a man's vote besides giving him three times the value of a cow or three times the rent of a cottage. The only really immoral bribery is that which induces a man, in return for some favour shown, to vote against his conscience; and an instance of this may be quoted from Thackeray's "Book of Snobs," in which Major Ponto confesses to having voted Tory, though he had always been a Liberal, to please Lord Bareacres, who had given him a good deal of shooting, and been very polite to his wife and daughter. Is this kind of bribery extinct now?

I have gazed with interest on some of the old nomination boroughs, many of which probably were

never much larger than they were in 1832; but as other towns were much smaller the contrast was less conspicuous. I have visited Great Bedwin and Ludgershall, in Wiltshire, once represented by George Selwyn, whose house, when I was there, was still standing. Bedwin, close to Savernake Forest, was a pocket borough belonging to the Ailesbury family; and an old man who recollected the Golden Age told me which were the "vote houses," as they were called, and said he remembered at election times the empty beer barrels and the "free and independent" voters rolling about the streets together. At Ludgershall I lunched at the principal inn, then of course little more than a public house, and I remember being struck with the immense size of the beds in one or two bedrooms which I entered. I wondered within myself whether half a dozen voters were ever tumbled into one of them after an electioneering orgy; for though in a pocket borough there was no necessity for bribes, members were expected to treat their constituents on a very liberal scale.

The subject in which Mr. Pell—to whom I return with apologies for my long digression—took the greatest interest was, I think, the Poor-Law. He believed it to be possible by the strict enforcement of the workhouse test to stamp out pauperism. I believe he regarded outdoor relief as one of the worst abuses which had survived the Reform Bill. This view of the subject was not in strict accordance with Tory traditions, and quite contrary to the principles of Mr. Pitt, as I once told him. But he would give the stereotyped answer that times were changed, that the increase of the population would by itself have made Mr. Pitt's idea impracticable; and to show that his own theory was both prac-

tical and possible, he pointed to the success which had attended Sir Baldwin Leighton's effort to stamp out pauperism on his own estate in Shropshire. Pell and Clare Sewell Read worked together in Parliament as the leaders of the agricultural party, though perhaps Mr. Chaplin also is entitled to a place among them. I knew Mr. Read, too, and had many talks with him, and many letters from him on questions of labour and agriculture, though I was never able, unfortunately, to accept his kind invitations to visit him at Honingham, in Norfolk.

Neither he nor Mr. Pell adopted any other than quite a plain style of speaking. Mr. Read, like Mr. Henley, was fond of speaking with his hands in his pockets. It is not a very dignified attitude, but it conveys an impression of *insouciance* and self-confidence which perhaps has its advantages in certain circumstances, though it would not be viewed with a very favourable eye if adopted by a new member. I was present at the farmers' dinner at the Salisbury Hotel in 1885, when Read announced his resignation of the post which Mr. Disraeli had given him in the Ministry of 1874, as Secretary of the Local Government Board. The occasion was the refusal of the Government to take some step for the protection of cattle against disease imported from abroad; and I remember I got well blown up for neglecting to step across Fleet Street and take the news to the *Standard* in Shoe Lane. Mr. Read did not minimise the extent of the sacrifice which he had made. Fifteen hundred a year was no slight loss, he said, to a tenant farmer. Of course, he was loudly cheered, and deservedly so. But I have often thought that the sacrifice was hardly called for.

I met the late Sir George Baden-Powell for the first

time at Alderley Park, where he was staying with the late Lord Stanley of Alderley. He had not then become the Tory member for the Kirkdale Division of Liverpool ; but he was bent on a political career, and I remember thinking how very likely he was to succeed. He always seemed to me one of the cleverest men I ever met—almost as clever as a man can be without being a genius. He was at Balliol, and he told me a good deal that was interesting about Jowett. Jowett dissuaded him from reading for honours, but recommended him instead to try for the English Essay prize. Baden-Powell took his advice, and it was followed by some valuable hints for his Essay on “The Political and Social Results of the Absorption of Small States by Large,” which gained the Chancellor’s prize in 1876. It was in 1885 that he was returned for Liverpool, and I have no doubt that if he had lived he would in due time have had a seat upon the Front Bench. He seemed to be taking to colonial business. But my acquaintance with him, after all, was cemented rather by field sports than by politics, though it is as a Tory member that he finds a place in this chapter. He married in 1892 Frances, daughter of C. Wilson, Esq., of Sydney, who brought him a considerable fortune and gave him an independent position.

While the Education Bill of 1902 was going through the House I saw a good deal of Professor Jebb, who was kind enough to let me interview him whenever I wished. He was very indignant with the Kenyon-Slaney clause, which he thought was quite inconsistent with the original principle of the Bill, and we were both in hope that it would be repealed or modified in the House of Lords. But, in spite of the efforts made by the Dukes of Norfolk and Northumberland, it was accepted, chiefly, if I

remember, through the influence of the Duke of Devonshire. The Lord Advocate, Mr. Graham Murray, was also good enough to talk with me on the Education Question. He, of course, agreed with Professor Jebb. I wondered then, and wonder still, why the Government either accepted the Kenyon-Slaney amendment or rejected the Duke of Northumberland's. But the old Whig tradition, jealousy of the clergy, still lingers in aristocratic circles, whether Whig or Tory—for on this question again the Tories have departed from their original principles. I asked Lord Stanhope if nothing could be done to save the Duke of Northumberland's amendment, but he said it was too late. I thought, however, that a better fight might have been made for it.

I have mentioned Lord Balfour of Burleigh in an earlier chapter, but I am reminded that I saw him several times at the Scotch Office, and that he always told me what I wanted to know. I have never found what I have read of in print—any disposition on the part of such men to evade speaking out. I know it is possible for a skilful and experienced diplomatist to talk to you in a strain of the greatest apparent frankness, and yet with such skilful and well-concealed reservations that when you leave his presence you find you have been told nothing; but I never had occasion to suspect such artifices in any of my conversations with members of either House of Parliament; and I may be allowed to add that whenever I have sought for information from Mr. Balfour himself, he has always spoken to me with a perfect frankness which no man could suspect of being simulated.

CHAPTER X.

THE CAVE.

Lord Palmerston's Domestic Policy—Formation of the Cave—How the Whigs were "Dished"—Lord Grosvenor's Amendment—The *Day* and its Brief Career.

BEFORE passing on to those more general memories which to many people will, perhaps, be more entertaining than my memories of statesmen and politicians, I must devote one short chapter to an episode in our political history with which I happened to be rather closely mixed up: I mean the famous "Cave" in which the Adullamites abode in the year 1866-7.

With the death of Lord Palmerston one chapter of our constitutional history came to an end. It represents just one generation, from 1832 to 1865. It was an era of moderate, middle-class reform to which both Whigs and Tories accommodated themselves, the latter taking the name of Conservatives instead of one which the later bearers of it had made so unpopular. Lord Palmerston, as much a Tory at heart as he had been in the days of Lord Liverpool, dared no longer call himself one, and as the Liberals appeared to be the winning side and to offer him the most congenial sphere of action, he donned their livery and observed their rites and ceremonies with sufficient decency till he became Prime Minister himself, when, though he still called himself a Liberal, he never cared to conceal his con-

tempt for Liberalism. That he sympathised more or less with the Liberal party on the Continent was due to the fact that he thought English interests were best promoted by siding with them. This was also Mr. Canning's creed. The restored monarchies showed little inclination to respect the wishes of Great Britain or to listen to the counsels of one to whom they were so deeply indebted—a debt too great, perhaps, to be either acknowledged or repaid. He saw, too, that the policy of the despotic Powers was irritating and stimulating the revolutionary spirit in Europe, and it seemed to him, therefore, that in checking them wherever he could he was acting on Conservative principles.

His domestic policy requires no explanation. Mr. Bright and Mr. Cobden, Mr. Milner Gibson and Mr. Gladstone understood it quite well. There was a certain audacity in the manner in which he openly supported by his vote proposals which he condemned in his speech. "I shall vote for the hon. member's motion," he was wont to say, "to show that I am not opposed to the principle," knowing all the time right well that the principle would never with his consent be reduced to practice. The system was perfectly successful. Lord John Russell's "Rest and be thankful" was practically the creed of two-thirds of the nation. But they had got used to Liberal talk and Liberal phraseology, and did not care to drop it. A number of nicknames had been fastened on Toryism with which people did not like to be pelted, and Lord Palmerston's attitude suited them down to the ground: reform on our lips, repose in our hearts; reform in the abstract, and repose in the concrete: that was the thing which was wanted. Had Lord Palmerston been ten years

younger, the history of the last fifty years would have been widely different.

It is necessary to look a little into what preceded the formation of the Cave if we are to understand its full significance. In the lately-published correspondence of the Earl of Lytton, there occurs a remarkable passage bearing on this period : " With what consummate ability have the Whigs continued for generations to make the Radicals of all sorts their faithful and useful allies, while systematically keeping them out of power and in a position of political subserviency. If the Whigs had not, in their senility, committed the capital error of entrusting the leadership of their party to Gladstone, an outsider, and if he had had no personal motive for betraying them to the Radicals, even now they would probably have remained the ruling power in England. I have no doubt it was a wise instinct of self-preservation which dictated the policy of making every Whig Cabinet a family party, and admitting none but born Whigs to the higher offices. But the most wonderful *tour de force* is that in a generation since 1831 they should have so long and so successfully played the part of the popular party, the party instinctively supported by all the *parvenus* and *roturiers*, without surrendering an atom of their social exclusiveness and family *morgue*. . . ." This is very true, yet it is not easy to see what alternative the Whigs had. They could not stand without the support of either the Tories or the Radicals. While Palmerston lived they had the support of the Tories ; but there was no one left to supply his place ; no one with the exquisite tact, popularity, and common-sense to play the same part. Lord John Russell had sunk below the

horizon ; “ he was invisible,” said Lord Elcho, “ to the naked eye.” Who was there, then ? They were almost obliged to trust themselves to Gladstone in the hope that he would be able to manage the Radical wing. But the Radical wing managed him. They caught him, and never let him go again.

The feeling of the country in the autumn of 1865 was decidedly hostile to organic change, and but languidly stirred by the alleged anomalies of the electoral system. The Whig section of the Liberal party were, in their hearts, opposed to any further reduction of the franchise, though they knew that from time to time some trifling concession to their Radical allies might be necessary. But beyond this it would do them no good. They had got under the existing system all they were ever likely to get ; they had more to lose than to gain by a Reform Bill. But it was otherwise with the Tories. They, under the existing system, seemed doomed to perpetual opposition, and the same prospect which made the Whigs reformers in the reign of George IV. reconciled the Tories to reform in the reign of Queen Victoria. From a purely party point of view they might have much to gain from a wide extension of the franchise. They could not well be worse off than they had been for the last twenty years.

This was not, perhaps, a very lofty view of the situation for statesmen to adopt. But it gave them an excellent practical motive for supporting an extended suffrage of which the Whigs were destitute. What the Whigs, however, saw was that if a popular Reform Bill had really become inevitable, the Tories must not have the credit of it. The question, they thought, belonged to themselves. Whatever popularity accrued

from it was part of their political assets. But neither a Radical Reform Bill nor a Tory one would suit their book, and their object clearly was to take the Russell Reform Bill and mould it into a measure which should do themselves as little harm as possible. If the Government had accepted Lord Dunkellin's amendment, this is what they might have had. Had Gladstone been content to tread in Lord Palmerston's footsteps, the Conservative Whigs might have retained their supremacy for a long time. By continually throwing sops to Cerberus they could have kept the seven-pounders in good humour. But by this time Mr. Gladstone, who had cut himself adrift from the Tories, was now equally determined not to serve again under the Whigs. He had had enough of that as Lord Palmerston's Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Bright, who now had his ear, knew quite well that bit-by-bit reform, which was the game of the Whigs, was fatal to the Radicals. He saw that a rating franchise had an element of permanence in it which a rental franchise had not, and he acted accordingly. Mr. Gladstone took his advice, and it was this, and not so much the Reform Bill of 1867, which "dished the Whigs."

The Whigs, I have been told, saw their danger. But it would not have suited them to move in a body against the Russell Reform Bill. They must not appear at this critical moment the enemies of reform. But they continued, with their usual skill, to make it appear that the Conservatives were chiefly answerable for that opposition to the Government Bill which they had secretly encouraged themselves. It was necessary, however, to give their followers a lead, and the heir of a great Whig house, a young man of known moderation,

and generally respected, was united with the son of a distinguished Tory peer in a combined attack upon a Bill in which the Whig supporters of the Government and even Whig members of the Administration discerned too clearly the Radical influence under which Mr. Gladstone was acting.

Such is a history of the famous "Cave" which created a degree of public excitement in the spring of 1866 greater, if I have been rightly informed, than even the Corn Law debate had ever aroused.

I remember well being one of a large crowd who assembled in Westminster Hall, which was then open to the public, to hear the result of the division on Lord Grosvenor's amendment, to the effect that the House ought to be in possession of the whole Government scheme, including the distribution of seats, before the Franchise Bill was read a second time. The Bill proposed a £7 rental franchise in the towns and £14 in the counties. If this Bill passed and the Act became law before the redistribution of seats was entered on, it was felt that the Government would have the House at their mercy. A General Election would bring the Government a large amount of support from the newly enfranchised constituencies, and, however objectionable their redistribution scheme, they might snap their fingers at the Opposition. This was felt very strongly in 1866, as it was again in 1885. In London generally the people were on the side of the Opposition, for everybody could see through the policy of the Government, and appreciate the advantage of treating reform as a whole and not by halves. But I think there was something more than this which influenced both "the man in the street" and the man in the slum. I remember people

talking about it as if it were a fair stand-up fight. Mr. Gladstone had "a probability of succeeding about him" which, as Sir Lucius O'Trigger says, "was mighty provoking." And I think many even of those who agreed with his general principles rather chuckled over the spectacle of his being "bearded in his den." At all events, on that memorable morning, 3 a.m., April 28th, the cheers in Westminster Hall when it was announced that the majority for Ministers was only five were loud and long.

I was standing at the time beside a Gladstonian friend, who appeared to care nothing at all about the political situation, but was absorbed in its dramatic interest. It was doubtful to the last how the division would go. It was not, as has often been the case on similar occasions, a foregone conclusion, the only question being by what majority the victory would be gained. Here it was anybody's battle to the time when the bell rang. As it was, a majority so small was tantamount to a defeat, but Mr. Gladstone decided not to resign. The Radicals wanted their rental franchise, which they foresaw could easily be lowered again as occasion offered, whereas a rating franchise represented a principle, and could less easily be broken down. They knew that if the question fell into the hands of the Tories they would propose a rating franchise, and this is what they afterwards did; but, as it was necessary to get them out of office at the earliest possible moment, the Whigs lent the Radicals sufficient aid to enable them to defeat it, though by doing so they cut their own throats.

The Russell Government having resigned on the carriage of Lord Dunkellin's amendment, the third Derby Administration was formed, in the summer of 1866. All

through that autumn and winter speculation was rife with regard to the probable policy of the new Ministry. Mr. Lowe's eloquent speeches against the Russell Reform Bill; his warnings against democracy, "where every thistle is a forest tree," and his protests against the moral and social ill-effects of equality, had sunk deep into the minds of many thinking men who knew nothing about the Trojan horse. And there are not wanting even now those who believe that if Lord Derby had boldly taken his stand against further concessions to democracy he would have had such an amount of support from public opinion as might have given pause to any Liberal or Radical Administration whatsoever. Whether this attitude would have had the desired result or not it is now useless to inquire. But among other circumstances which influenced the Government in coming to a different decision, the Hyde Park riots were doubtless one, though their significance at the time was greatly over-rated. After the Park railings had been broken down and all the mischief done, the Life Guards came up into Piccadilly. But it was always said by the police that they could have repulsed the rioters by themselves if the affair had been left to their own management. Why it was not I never understood. The result was disastrous, for it led to a belief among the working classes that governments were to be intimidated by popular demonstrations, and, what was just as bad from a party point of view at the moment, it discredited the Tories, who were charged with weakness in having permitted such a mob triumph, though what justice there was for such a charge it is difficult to understand.

It was in the autumn of 1866 that it occurred to an

enterprising journalist that in the existing state of parties an independent Conservative paper representing the views of the "Cave" would have a good chance of success. It was an excellent idea, and had the scheme been properly launched, it is probable that the *Day* might have taken a permanent place among the leading journals of London. The projector consulted me, and asked me whether, if the paper were started, I would write the political articles. A certain amount of capital was promised by the friends of the proprietor, and it was hoped that the Cave would do the rest. The leading members of it were appealed to, and they all promised their confidence and their support. They also opened their purse strings, and continued to subsidise the new journal for some months, inspiring its leaders and giving us all those private "tips" which editors so highly prize.

For some months I was in constant communication with Lord Elcho and Major Anson, a brother of Lord Lichfield, and I sometimes saw Lord Grosvenor, and also Mr. Spender, who was much interested in the paper. It had a great success at first, and Mr. W. H. Smith offered to take all that we could print. It was eagerly read, because it was the only organ of opinion through which the policy of the Cave could be ascertained, and during the debates on the Reform Bill in 1867, when any important division was impending, the columns of the *Day* were consulted to see which way the Cave would vote, as they sometimes held the issue in their hands.

I used to go down to the House of Commons late at night to see Lord Elcho or one of his friends, and get my cue for next day's article, which I wrote in our office in Essex Street sometimes up to three o'clock in the

morning, or even later. Of articles written in this extreme haste the less said about the style the better. But they seemed to go down with the public, and satisfied our supporters. The policy of the Cave was to support the Conservative Reform Bill, though Mr. Lowe had shaken the dust off his feet against it. But they were all anxious to avoid saying anything disrespectful of Mr. Gladstone. I had my knuckles rapped severely on one occasion for venturing to compare him on some quite trifling occasion to the dog in the manger. The Cave men were gentlemen, and felt that one who had so recently been their leader was still entitled to their regard. Matthew Arnold, in his well-known dictum about sweetness and light, and the qualities of an aristocracy, especially mentioned Lord Elcho as an instance of what he meant by sweetness, and certainly he deserved the epithet, if any man ever did. Colonel Anson, too, was a very pleasant man, and I got on capitally with all of them, so long as the paper lasted. Unfortunately, there had been some misunderstanding with regard to the funds which the editor and proprietor had undertaken to provide, and when Lords Elcho, Grosvenor, and Lichfield found that this money was not forthcoming, they not unnaturally concluded that they had been deceived, and that their contributions had been obtained under false pretences. This was not the case. But perhaps the noblemen and gentlemen who had advanced considerable sums on the strength of these representations can hardly be blamed for withdrawing their support when they found that they had never rested on any solid foundation.

This was a time of great activity among Parliamentary reformers. You might have thought that not

one but a dozen Abbé Siéyès had suddenly appeared in this island. We published some philosophical speculations on the subject from a Scotch professor—I think he was—which delighted a certain section of readers. I remember a clergyman rushing into the office one morning and crying out, like “Toad-in-the-Hole,” “Ah! this is what we want—this is what we have been waiting for!” But it was not what the House of Commons was waiting for, and the speculators mourned over the stupidity of both political parties, who would not approach these questions in the spirit of Plato or Aristotle.

I myself was much disappointed at the stoppage of the paper, and made the most strenuous efforts to avert it. It was not wholly on interested grounds that I did this, for I liked the work and the excitement, and the consciousness of playing a part in a great political movement, and I valued even more than this the acquaintance which I thus made with distinguished men and the confidence which they reposed in me. Still, the loss of twelve guineas a week was something; and, putting aside for a time some other work on which I was engaged, I packed up my things and retreated to my father’s parsonage in Leicestershire, there to ruminate on the mutability of human affairs, and to diversify this occupation by catching perch and roach in the brook, and at other times going to sleep in the long, cool grass. I had spent a happy time on the *Day*, and I shall always look back upon it with satisfaction. I had, nevertheless, the mortification to discover that half the people in Leicestershire, though much interested in the Reform question, had never so much as heard of the *Day*. *Verecundum patria*. Such is reputation!

CHAPTER XI.

TORY LADIES.

The Era of the Political Hostess—Lady Granville and the Rising Liberal Journalist—Lady Jeune's Receptions—Sir John Gorst and Lord Beaconsfield's Funeral—Sir Richard Webster—An Eminent Counsel on County Government—Reminiscences of Prince Charles Edward—Lady Ridley—A Sympathiser with Lord Iddesleigh—Lady Carnarvon—Lady Stanhope—Lady Salisbury—Lady Winifred Herbert—Mrs. St. John Brodrick.

"SHE is the only good woman the Tories have," says one Whig member to another, talking of Lady Deloraine in "Sybil" in the year 1839. Those were the days in which the political lady was still a great personage; not that she has yet lost all her original brightness, or all her original utility. But times have changed, and the class on whom her fascinations were chiefly exercised no longer possess sufficient political power to repay those sacrifices which, according to Lady St. Julian, were necessary to the kind of social bribery in which she and her sisters were proficient.

The middle class, for more than a whole generation, held the fate of parties in their hands. The class above them was "in Society" already. The class below them had as yet no ambition to enter it. But between these came a numerous and powerful section of the community, with plenty of money, and struggling for recognition. To get into Parliament was the first step, and their votes were made the price of admission within the charmed circle.

Then, indeed, the political great lady, if possessed of the requisite tact and the necessary fascinations, could exercise considerable influence on the fortunes of the Party to whose interests she was attached. Loyalty to a pretty woman who took you by the hand, who coaxed you and flattered you, and made you feel for the moment not merely in Society, but of it, was not very difficult to secure ; and loyalty to the patroness meant, of course, fidelity to the party. Such was the important function discharged by " the great ladies " who, in spite of Disraeli's satire, were for a number of years a real power in politics. Even before it became necessary to lavish so much attention on the middle class, these seductive dames did good work, both in confirming the allegiance of friends and in sapping the allegiance of foes. There is still a wide field open to the influence of such attractions. As the middle-class members gradually lost their importance, journalists and men of letters began to take their place. " In my time," says Major Pendennis, " poetry and genius and all that sort of thing were devilish disreputable. But the times are changed now—there's a run upon literature—clever fellows get into the best houses in town, be gad ! "

But what was only beginning in Major Pendennis's time, has since his day become a recognised part of the social system. And many great ladies welcome to their drawing-rooms men who have made any name for themselves in literature, journalism, or art, quite as much, I think, with the view of doing honour to those professions as with any idea of enlisting advocates for their own political friends. " This is a neutral house," Raikes once said to me at Lady Stanhope's, as Sir William Harcourt stalked in, towering above the heads of some

smaller Tory guests ; and I think nearly as much might be said of all the Tory drawing-rooms in which I ever found myself. Men of letters, however, were not to be had quite so readily as the middle-class member of Parliament described in "Sybil." And I remember very well when a well-known Liberal journalist who was just rising into repute received a card from Lady Granville, he at once threw it into the fire. "I don't know Lady Granville," he said, "and Lady Granville does not know me. What right has she to send me a card?" He treated it as a piece of impertinence. The man, who was a friend of mine, and has since risen to great political eminence, perhaps carried his ideas of independence a little too far. And I have always thought that there was more false pride in refusing the invitation than there would have been humility in accepting it.

It is now nearly thirty years ago since I first met Lady St. Helier, then the Hon. Mrs. Stanley, the young and handsome widow of Colonel John Stanley, of the Guards, brother and heir-presumptive to the then Lord Stanley of Alderley. She was a very clever woman, and had by that time established her receptions in Wimpole Street on a recognised footing, and made them so agreeable that all the world of fashion, literature, and art flocked to her rooms, which were always crowded. She had very catholic sympathies, and I first met her at dinner in Devonshire Street, at H. M. Hyndman's, who had not then developed into the full-blooded Socialist which he afterwards became, and was only known as a clever writer with strong Radical proclivities. I continued to be on friendly terms with him for a long time. We belonged to the same club, and when Mr. Hyndman

was compelled to leave it in consequence of the part he had taken in the Trafalgar Square riots, our windows were broken by his friends. However, all this was in the future. I sat next Mrs. Stanley at a well-appointed dinner-table which indicated no aversion to the inequalities of Society or to the iniquities of prosperity.

After dinner I rejoined her in the drawing-room, and the next morning I received an invitation to dine with her at a house she had taken in Putney for the summer. The other guests were Lady Tweeddale (Mrs. Stanley's sister), Mr. Edward Stanhope (then a member of the Disraeli Government), Mr. Theodore Walrond, and Mr. Hosack. After this we were usually asked to her receptions in Wimpole Street, which she afterwards exchanged for Harley Street. Here we met everybody : princes and princesses, statesmen, soldiers, authors, actors and actresses, making up a most novel and delightful medley. Here I remember, soon after the change of Government in 1880, seeing Mr. Cross and Lord Granville in close conversation in a corner of the room, and being interested in overhearing Mr. Cross say to the Whig Foreign Secretary, "Oh, if the French say that, of course it's all right." Here I remember Miss Gertrude Kingston tripping up to me, just about the time when there was so much talk about thought-reading. "Oh," she said, "I've just been telling Sir Francis Jeune* (the judge of the Divorce Court) that his Court will soon have to be abolished ; there'll be no further use for it. If people even wanted to do anything wrong, they daren't think about it, for fear their thoughts should be discovered." "Oh, but, Miss Kingston," I

* Mrs. Stanley married Sir Francis Jeune in 1881. He was created Lord St. Helier more than twenty years afterwards.

said, "you never do think of doing anything wrong, I'm sure." Upon which, with a little pout, she turned away.

Miss Ellen Terry and her sister Marion, whom I knew very well, were often there. I saw very little of the former, but more of Marion, who was very pretty and very agreeable, and I had always a great opinion of her as a comic actress, though she ceased after a time to appear in such parts, and I don't know that she has ever resumed them. She lived at one time just opposite to our house, and dined with us more than once. I am here reminded that I came very suddenly one evening, on turning a corner, upon a lady whom I did not at first recognise. She was standing alone, with a settled melancholy on her countenance; how changed from her whom I had often seen keep stalls, boxes, and gallery in a roar, and whose eyes, mouth, and chin brimmed over with humour: now she looked the picture of gloom! It was Mrs. John Wood.

Calling on Lady Jeune one Sunday afternoon, I found little Miss Norreys sitting alone with her, a quiet, ladylike young actress whom I had often admired on the stage. Somehow or other the names of Lord and Lady Beaconsfield came up, and with them the old joke about his marriage, already mentioned. I remember the girl asking with a pensive air and in a tone of great earnestness, "And did he marry for love?" Poor thing! she had, if I remember aright, a melancholy end—I hope not accelerated by any such secret sorrow as Viola described.

Sir Stafford Northcote, who had known Lady Jeune from her childhood, was often at her house, and so, too,

was Mr. Balfour. On one occasion, I remember, my wife sat just opposite to me next to Sir John Gorst, who took her in to dinner. She asked him whether he had been to Lord Beaconsfield's funeral. His answer was characteristic. "No," he said; "I was not invited, and I am not one of those people who invite themselves." On another occasion, when I dined there, the Prince and Princess Christian were of the party, and after dinner I found myself sitting opposite Lord Carlingford and Dr. Smith, of the *Quarterly Review*, who began talking of Junius. They both professed themselves strong "Franciscans," as it was called. I ventured to interpose the remark that Lord Grenville was reported to have said that he knew who Junius was, and that it was not Francis. Lord Carlingford, who was in trouble over his riband and his shirt collar, answered rather shortly that the statement was not so well-authenticated as I supposed; and as I saw that he was very uncomfortable about the back of his neck, I forebore to ask him anything more. Mr. John Murray, whom I often met at Lady Jeune's, talked to me once a good deal about Junius, and showed me some autograph letters on the subject. He published a very able article in the *Quarterly* by Mr. Coulton, some time in the 'fifties, attacking the Franciscan theory, and putting forward Lord Lyttelton as the author of Junius. Lord Macaulay, who wrote a letter to Mr. Murray on the subject did, I think, show that Junius was not likely to have been Lyttelton, but he got no nearer any proof that he was Sir Philip Francis. Mr. Massey's History of England should be consulted on this question.

In the drawing-room on the evening to which I have referred I was presented to the Princess Christian,

who asked me a few questions about myself and my writings, which showed all the ready tact with which I suppose Royalty is born. The Prince, I remember, was much interested in the fact that I had met with an old acquaintance of his in the shape of a stable-man who used to be a rough-rider to the pack of hounds with which the Prince hunted in Hampshire. "Oh, yes," he said, "I remember old Taylor well. What is he doing now?" I told him he was foreman at a livery stable in South Kensington, and apparently doing pretty well. He seemed glad to hear about him.

Lady Jeune's was a decidedly Tory house at this time, or—more properly—I should say Unionist. Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlain would be there, and Lord James of Hereford, and others of less note. But Toryism predominated, and among the cheeriest of Tory members who frequented these lively gatherings was George Russell, whom I had known long before at Oxford, and who was now Sir George, and member for a division of Berkshire. He had the most joyous countenance of any man I ever knew, and it was impossible to be in low spirits for three minutes in his company. Marriott, who was much petted by the Tories after winning a doubtful seat at Brighton; Mr. Mallock; and last, but not least, Sir Richard Webster, come into my mind as I look back to those days. A friend of mine volunteered to put a legal question to Sir Richard, who, as might be expected, evaded it with the usual reply of a lawyer. The question, I think, concerned the relation which would exist between the editor and the proprietors of a newspaper, supposing a deceased proprietor who was sole owner to have left the property to his natural representatives, and the editorship to somebody else for life.

Could the latter do as he liked with it : convert it from a Unionist to a Home Rule organ, no matter how much the sale might thereby be reduced ? The future Lord Chief Justice said he could not answer such a question offhand or without seeing the testator's will.

Lord Rowton often came, and once when he was late I heard Lady Jeune ask him how many ties he had spoiled. Mr. Bouverie, too, who had then become thoroughly anti-Gladstonian, used to appear now and again, and I remember being one of a deputation appointed by Lady Jeune to go and ask him why he shouldn't stand for Northampton, the seat being then vacant through the doings of Mr. Bradlaugh. It was seriously urged upon him that he was the man to do it, and save the seat from the Radicals. Mr. Bouverie smiled good-naturedly, and said he would think about it and see "whether it would wash." However, he came to the conclusion that the scheme was not a fast colour, and we heard no more of it. I think Greenwood was one of the deputation. He and Traill and Alfred Austin and myself, Lawson of the *Telegraph*, who came occasionally, and William Stebbing, of the *Times*, were, I think, the chief representatives of the Unionist Press in Lady Jeune's multifarious assemblies. But soldiers and sailors, ambassadors and princes, lawyers and authors, all passed through the rooms in turn. Sir James Knowles was usually in evidence at Lady Jeune's, and I met both Mr. Macmillan and Mr. Prothero there occasionally.

I think the last time I ever dined in Harley Street was at a small party on a Sunday. The Duke of Leeds was there and Colonel Saunderson, and Edward Pember, the well-known Parliamentary counsel, whom I had

known for a long time. He began as an uncompromising Tory and used to write for the Press. He then edged away to Liberalism, but finally rejoined his old friends when Gladstonianism became too much for him. I remember hearing him speak strongly on the subject of the Tory County Government Bill of 1888, alleging that it was impossible for county business to be done better than it was at Quarter Sessions. "I have seen," he said, "a plain country gentleman deliver a long and complicated statement involving the study and mastery of a pile of documents, with a clearness and conciseness and knowledge of business which left nothing to be desired. And all this he did for nothing—a task which I wouldn't have undertaken myself for a fifty-guinea brief."

Lady Jeune's Sunday afternoons were always very pleasant; one was sure to see somebody worth seeing and hear something worth hearing. Once I found quite a family party there: Lady Jeune's two pretty daughters and their cousins, pretty girls also, though in a different style, the daughters of the present Lord Stanley of Alderley. Miss Madeleine Stanley (the present Mrs. St. John Brodrick) and Miss Dorothy Stanley (the present Mrs. Allhusen) were then quite young, and indeed I remember them as children. As they grew up they helped Lady Jeune to entertain her Sunday friends, and I had many pleasant conversations with both of them.

In the summer of 1885 I think, Lady Jeune took a house near Manningtree, in Essex, and was kind enough to invite me to pass a night there, as I was staying in the neighbourhood. The two young ladies were then children interested in tame rabbits and such-like pets,

but as I went away early the next morning I had no time to inspect their menagerie. In the evening after dinner Lady Jeune told us some interesting stories of the old Scotch Jacobites, one of which I introduced into an article in the *Quarterly Review* for October, 1899, under the title of "Studies of the 'Forty-five." As a genuine family tradition, I cannot help repeating it here. It was Lady Jeune's grandmother who could speak of her acquaintance with "Long Peg," the sobriquet by which a famous old Scotswoman was long known. As a young girl Peg had come to Brahan Castle with a message from the Prince, who was there on a visit to Lady Fortrose, the daughter-in-law of the attainted Earl of Seaforth, who had been "out" in "the 'Fifteen." Peggy was among the privileged few who were admitted by Lady Fortrose to peep at the Prince through the drawing-room door as he drank his coffee; and she afterwards begged of her sympathetic hostess the coffee cup which he had used, and which no meaner lips were ever allowed to touch. Many years afterwards she obtained another relic from Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie, whose husband succeeded to the family estates in 1784, and was created Lord Seaforth in 1797. This was an old green velvet cushion on which the Prince had rested his feet. It is needless to say that both precious relics were religiously preserved, and when Peg died early in the last century she desired that they might be buried with her.

This is a Jacobite memory, but it is not out of place among Tory memories, and I have elsewhere in these pages recorded other traces of a creed which lingered longer in these islands than is commonly supposed.

Lady Jeune—I never think of her as Lady St.

Helier—was a “Tory lady” of the first class, quite equal, I should say, to Lady Deloraine, whom, oddly enough, in some accidental particulars she much resembles. During the last few years I have seen comparatively little of her—my increasing deafness has made me rather avoid Society than endeavour to keep up my acquaintance with it by the usual methods.

It was at a dinner at Lady Jeune’s that I first met Lady Ridley, then the wife of Sir Matthew Ridley, who became Secretary of State in 1895. She was a beautiful woman, and her receptions at Carlton House Terrace were among the most brilliant of the season. Her rooms were much larger than Lady Jeune’s, and it was some time in the ’eighties when I first had the privilege of entering them. I continued to receive cards for them down to the date of her death, in 1899. Early in that year she had issued cards for the Wednesdays and Saturdays in March, and it was on the very morning of the first Wednesday that she found herself too ill to see company. The receptions were postponed, and never, alas! resumed. It was in the summer, often late in July—for the season lasted longer then—that her rooms were more generally thrown open when I first knew her. She was a staunch “Tory lady,” perhaps more so even than Lady Jeune, though neither she nor her husband came of a Tory family. Sir Matthew’s father was the Whig member who in 1818 proposed Mr. Wynn for the Speakership in opposition to the Tory candidate, Mr. Manners Sutton. And it was curious that, by the irony of fate, Sir Matthew himself, when Tory candidate for the chair in 1895, was opposed and defeated by the Liberal candidate, Mr. Gully. But there were no traces of these ante-

cedents in the Carlton House Terrace of 1890. Lady Ridley's assemblies were less miscellaneous than Lady Jeune's. I don't remember seeing any actors or actresses there except Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, who were usually surrounded by an admiring throng, Mr. Kendal looking very proud of his wife.

I remember meeting there a lady who was a great friend of Sir Stafford Northcote, on the night when it first became known that he was to leave the Foreign Office to make way for Lord Salisbury. Lord Iddesleigh, as he then was, had by some accident seen the change announced in the newspapers before he received any notice of it from Lord Salisbury, then the head of the Government. This was in the month of January, 1887. The retirement of Lord Randolph Churchill from the Exchequer and Leadership of the House of Commons led to Mr. W. H. Smith being appointed Leader, and also First Lord of the Treasury, a post hitherto held by Lord Salisbury, who now felt it necessary to take the Foreign Office. There was great diversity of opinion with regard to the treatment of Lord Iddesleigh in this affair. He was the last man to complain, but he must have felt that scant consideration had been shown him. When in 1881 Sir Stafford Northcote had become Leader of the Opposition, Lord Randolph christened him "the Goat," and the bulk of the Tory Party who supported him shared the appellation. The Fourth Party, which consisted of seventeen sheep and four shepherds, naturally held "the Goats" in great contempt, and it became one of their chief objects to hunt down the leader of the flock. At this time Mr. Balfour had ceased to be a member of the party.

Whatever justification may have existed for these attacks, it is not to be supposed that the victim of them could have regarded with much complacency the elevation of the chief promoter of them into his own place as Leader of the House, thereby seeming to give colour to all the charges which the Fourth Party had brought against him. His dismissal—for it came to that—from the Foreign Office was only the last straw, and the indignation of his friends was, I think, very natural. The Tory lady whom I met at Lady Ridley's stamped her little foot upon the ground, declaring it was the result of a disgraceful intrigue which had been brewing for years. I will not enter upon this question; but I remember the excitement it created in Lady Ridley's drawing-room, where little groups of ladies and gentlemen more or less interested in politics stood about discussing it.

Lady Ridley, however, though a great political lady, aimed at something more than making her house the rendezvous of a party. I remember one occasion at the end of the season, and at the end of her last reception, when she did me the honour to take me aside and say that I had been so very good and so constant (in fact, I hadn't missed one of her parties—*they* were too good) that she hoped I would help her in her design of establishing "a little salon." I placed myself entirely at her service, as anyone may suppose. But how Lady Ridley could have imagined it possible I could be of any service to her in carrying out such a project, I never could understand. I should doubt, indeed, whether such a thing was possible at that time in London, whatever allies she might have had. What Holland House may have been like once upon a time,

I don't know, and have never met with anyone who did. Even Mr. Thackeray used to say, "I never saw a Whig, though I have often wished I was one." The Whig Party are said to have made the most of their social advantages. And their long monopoly of the Court in the eighteenth century had probably schooled the Whig ladies better than the Tory in all those arts and witcheries essential to success in the pretty game they played. But if Holland House were revived to-morrow, would it have the kind of political influence which it had a hundred years ago? Were another Lady Palmerston to rise out of the Whig ranks, could she, at this time of day, create another Cambridge House? Would the "Labour Party" care for her smiles, or the Nationalists be disarmed by her allurements? Before the great lady reappears who is to play this part over again, many other changes must happen, of which there are no signs as yet.

Of Lady Carnarvon I have spoken in an earlier chapter. While Lord Carnarvon still lived she held receptions in Portman Square, and I remember meeting there Mr. Rider Haggard. After her husband's death, she took a house in Charles Street, Berkeley Square, with smaller rooms, which I have seen as full as they could hold. But I think I saw more political notabilities at Lady Stanhope's. It was at Lady Stanhope's that I was for the first and only time in my life in the same room with Mr. Gladstone—that is, as far as I can recollect, for I think he must have been present sometimes at other large parties. But on this occasion I was close to him. He was not speaking to anybody, but kept walking backwards and forwards in a corner of the room like a caged tiger, and, as I thought

at the moment, gnashing his teeth! But I believe he was only taking lozenges, or something of that kind—either for neuralgia or for his throat.

At Lady Salisbury's receptions, whether in Arlington Street or at the Foreign Office, of course we met all the world. Lord Salisbury himself, who was generally supposed to preserve a somewhat grave exterior, would at these parties sometimes indulge in hearty laughter. I remember Sir James Knowles amusing him very much about something, when he laughed all over—lips, legs, and arms. I used to meet here Musurus, whom I always liked, but Lord Salisbury didn't. He once told me that he thought the Turkish Ambassador a very stupid man. I certainly never found him so; for in his own house, when once squatted on the sofa and in for a talk, he was one of the most amusing men I ever came across. Lord Salisbury, however, may have found him slow at understanding the Turkish policy of the Government. But of this more presently. This was the only house, I think, at which I ever met the late Lord Stanley of Alderley, of whom likewise I shall have more to say hereafter. His deafness made him averse to general society. But he used to come to Lord Salisbury's, and it was good to stand next to him at a party of that kind. His remarks were usually of a very original character. Sir Theodore and Lady Martin I have seen at Arlington Street. Sir Theodore and Professor Aytoun were two pillars of Toryism, and Lady Martin herself was a most gracious hostess. She had finally retired from the stage at the time I am speaking of. But it was not long before that she said to a friend of mine: "If you'll find a Romeo, I'll find a Juliet." But I don't think she ever did.

The last time I saw her was at the unveiling of Sir Walter Scott's bust in Westminster Abbey by the Duke of Buccleuch. I walked away from the Abbey with Mr. Balfour, who, referring to what he had said in his speech about Byron and Richardson, asked me whether I was a disciple of the Lake School, or words to that effect. I in turn asked him whether he thought Macaulay was right in saying that Byron was the interpreter of the Lake School to the 'general public, adding that I thought nobody would ever have really understood Wordsworth any the better by reading Byron. If I remember aright, he said he thought so, too.

The Duchess of Rutland was at home on Sunday afternoons at Cambridge Gate. I used to go there when I could, for the Duchess was very nice to talk to, and there was little Lady Victoria, too, as amusing as she had been at Belvoir. "Here's a gentleman," said the Duke, "who says he remembers you at Belvoir." "Oh, does he?" was the tart reply of the young lady, in a tone of decided contempt.

Of Lady Winifred Herbert, who married first Captain Byng, and afterwards Herbert Gardiner, now Lord Burghclere, I saw very little after her marriage. A good many years had elapsed when I went to a party at her house, when she greeted me with the exclamation, "Why, you are quite an apparition!" But my lamp of memory is burning very low now, and when I have paid my respects to Mrs. St. John Brodrick I must take my leave of ladies' society for a while. Mrs. Brodrick, soon after her marriage, used to receive in Portland Place, and her rooms used to fill well. As the very pretty young wife of a Tory Cabinet Minister,

she was naturally a favourite with the party ; but I had known her so long that we talked rather about people and books than about politics. It was in Portland Place, too, that I last saw Mrs. Allhusen. This was just before the last General Election, in the winter of 1906. Mr. Allhusen was then sitting member for Hackney, and they had taken a house, so his wife told me, in that quarter of the town to facilitate canvassing. But if a Helen had come to the rescue nothing could have averted the torrent of Radicalism which then swept over England. Mr. Allhusen was defeated by Mr. Spicer, though only by a small majority of about 600. A like disappointment befel her sister, for Mr. St. John Brodrick lost his seat for the Guildford Division to Mr. Cowan.



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T. E. Keibel

CHAPTER XII.

TORY ARCADIA.*

The Halfords — Wistow — Sir Robert Peel's Frigidity — The Old Duke of Cambridge—His Dialogue with a Curate—Likened to the Hippopotamus—A Question of Clerical Etiquette—Sir Henry Halford, the Physician—Could the Duke of York have Prevented the Revolution of 1828-32 ?—The Second Sir Henry Halford—The Last of the Chanticleers—His Love for the Classics—The Family becomes Extinct—The New Poor Law—A Hunt Breakfast at Quorn—Boys and Port Wine—The Economics of County Influence—Parsons of Arcadia—Eccentrics.

THE following are all personal experiences relating to rural conditions, such as they were before the days of Mr. Arch and agricultural depression. I was brought up on terms of great intimacy with the Halford family.† We lived at Kilby, a village about a mile from Wistow, and the same distance from Newton Harcourt, where in the lifetime of the old physician, Mr. and Mrs. Halford lived. My father was vicar of the three parishes. But there was no village at Wistow. There had been one in former days, and part of the land on which it once stood is covered by a fine piece of water lying just below the Hall, which stands upon a rising ground and is approached through an avenue of immemorial elms.

The Halfords were a strictly Tory family. The

* Some few anecdotes in the earlier part of this chapter are republished, with Mr. John Murray's permission, from the *Quarterly Review*.

† See *post*, pp. 157-160.

estate was left by the last baronet of the old line, Sir Charles Halford, who died in 1780, to the descendants of Elizabeth Halford, who, in the middle of the eighteenth century, married a Leicester alderman whose daughter in turn married Dr. James Vaughan, a physician of great repute in the town of Leicester. Thus his eldest son, at the death of Sir Charles's widow—who, after her husband's death, married Lord Denbigh—came into the Wistow property. He had previously been created a baronet by George III., and he now took the name, and became Sir Henry Halford of Wistow, the first of a new line of baronets. He was very successful in his profession, and enjoyed for many years a highly lucrative practice. He has been called the Chesterfield of physicians. That he owed something to his courtly manners—partly natural to him, but improved by his long acquaintance with the Court, and by the wide practice among the aristocracy which the Court physician to four sovereigns in succession was certain to command—is likely enough. So popular was he with William IV. that Lady Jersey told my father in 1836, when he asked her to try to bring some little publication before the notice of the King, that he could have no better introduction than Sir Henry's. "You have Sir Henry Halford," she said; "you have only to mention his name and the Palace gates will fly open."

It is needless to say that Sir Henry was a Tory of the Tories, and he represented the old school in more ways than one. His dress was of the date of the Regency. He wore powder in his hair, short nankeen trousers in summer, and usually a snuff-coloured coat. His house, too, has every right to be celebrated in Tory memories.

Sir Richard Halford, in the seventeenth century, was at the head of the Tory interest in South Leicestershire, and Charles I.'s manager. The King himself slept at Wistow before the battle of Naseby, of which the scene is some ten or twelve miles distant; and though the Hall has since been enlarged, his room has been carefully preserved, and I myself have had the honour of sleeping in it. A saddle, spurs, and a sword which he left behind were carefully preserved at Wistow; and, in fact, the house was redolent of Toryism. Sir Henry married a daughter of Lord St. John of Bletsoe, a lady who had known Mr. Pitt. On one occasion when she sat down to play chess with a visitor she said, "Ah, I once used to play chess with a very great man," and it was always assumed that she meant Mr. Pitt. I can just recollect her, and no more.

Sir Henry was a great whist player, and so was my father—players, that is, of the old school, but very good both of them, as men played then at the most scientific tables. The baronet and the parson knew each other's game, and each was hard to beat when they got together, and during Sir Henry's stay at Wistow my father was usually at the Hall one evening a week at the least. He was always invited to meet any distinguished company whom Sir Henry entertained at Wistow. Sir Robert Peel came there once; and the old Duke of Cambridge, father of his late Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief. Of Sir Robert Peel my father's accounts always reminded me of the "Chicken's" description of Dombey: "he was as stiff a cove as ever he see"; but that, nevertheless, "it was within the resources of science to double him up." Lord Beaconsfield, who did double him

up, has noticed in the Life of Lord George Bentinck the defects of manner under which Peel laboured. "Sir Robert Peel had a bad manner, of which he was conscious; he was by nature very shy, but forced early in life into eminent positions, he had formed an artificial manner, haughtily stiff or oppressively bland, of which, generally speaking, he could not divest himself." My father, who was himself the most genial of mankind, was struck by the frigidity of the great man, and the distance he observed towards the guests who had been invited to meet him. Unlike Sir Robert Walpole, he was, except in the company of two or three very intimate friends, seen to less advantage in his "social hour" than at any other time.

A very different man indeed was the old Duke, who came to Wistow, I think, several times, and my father met him at dinner more than once. He dined there one Sunday, when, I think, there was no other guest. This was long after Lady Halford's death, when Sir Henry's niece, Miss Vaughan, sat at the head of his table. The Duke, in a good-humoured, jolly way, expressed his surprise to his hostess that there was no roast beef and plum pudding on the table. "Why," he said, "when I dine with my sister Molly on Sunday, we always have roast beef and plum pudding." One day, soon after this, the curate of a neighbouring parish was asked to meet his Royal Highness. He was a man of good family, and very popular in the neighbourhood, and the Duke's idea of a clergyman's occupations did not apparently embrace much pastoral duty. After dinner he began a conversation with him in an easy, friendly manner. "And what are your pursuits, sir? Do you hunt,

sir ? ” “ No, sir.” “ Ah, then, you shoot, I suppose ? ” “ No, sir.” “ H'm, a fisherman, eh ? ” “ No, sir ; I don't care much for fishing.” The Duke was puzzled. “ You read a good deal—perhaps a scholar, eh ? ” “ No, sir ; I'm afraid I'm no great reader.” “ Then what the devil *do* you do ? ”

The Duke's eccentricities are well known. In church, when he repeated the verse in the Psalms, “ Why hop ye so, ye high hills ? ” he thought it necessary to stoop down and tell Sir Henry's grandson, then a boy of eleven or twelve years of age, that “ the thing was impossible.” He was generally known in his later years as the good duke, for no other reason, it would seem, than because he was always good-natured and always willing to preside at public dinners, or discharge any other functions which required the presence of Royalty. A witty Oxford undergraduate wrote a paper, which Dickens published in *Household Words*, called “ The Good Hippopotamus,” showing that a grateful public were bound to recognise in this animal the same social virtues which pleased them so greatly in the Duke. The public could come and see him eat and bathe and show himself generally for their amusement, and what did the Duke do more ? It was not meant for a spiteful satire, nor was it ever taken as such ; and the Duke himself, if he ever saw it, probably had a hearty laugh over it. The housemaids at Wistow, when they went about their work in the morning, used to hear his Royal Highness praying most fervently, as the reapers reaping early heard the Lady of Shalott.

It would be curious if what I am now going to mention was due to any dim tradition of eighteenth-century Toryism, when the country gentlemen didn't care

much about the Bishops, who were generally Whigs, while the country clergy were most of them staunch Tories. The Tory fox-hunter in the *Freeholder* tells Addison that his own county is a very happy one : " there's not a single Presbyterian in it except the Bishop." Now it so happened that one day, when Bishop Blomfield was a guest at Wistow, my father was asked to dine, and before they sat down Sir Henry called on my father as vicar of the parish to say grace, upon which the Bishop immediately jumped up and said it himself. Sir Henry, one would think, must have been perfectly well acquainted with clerical etiquette in such matters, and Bishop Blomfield was not the man to have committed what, unless he was strictly in order, would have been an act of great rudeness.

The old physician's Toryism showed itself in another way. In the parish of Kilby, and partially in that of Newton, he made my father his representative, with the result that a kind of paternal government prevailed in these villages during my father's lifetime. His word was law. But as he very seldom used a hard one, the villagers reposed easily under the mild sway of one who thoroughly understood them, and whom they themselves understood. As a magistrate, he was said to err too much on the side of leniency, and one rather notorious character in the neighbourhood said he always liked to go before " the old gentleman as drove the white pony." He was a Tory of that time when, notwithstanding the disturbances on the Continent, and some riots and conspiracies at home, England, on the whole, reposed peacefully under the shadow of the old Constitution, which, whatever its faults, rested on a solid principle, and seemed for many years unlikely to be

shaken by anything that could happen. Sir William Heathcote, writing to a friend in the year 1826, speaks of "the political agitation, which, partly from the circumstances of the times, partly from the course of legislation, conducted with no conceivable object, as far as I can make out, except to produce this very result, now pervades and poisons the ordinary current of everyday life in a manner of which our young days afforded no example, and which makes life in England necessarily more or less miserable, at least to a person of my temperament, opinions, and prejudices." The repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, followed by Roman Catholic Emancipation, came like claps of thunder in a clear sky. During the whole of Lord Liverpool's Administration, the upper and middle classes of English society enjoyed a feeling of security to which they have since been strangers. Then, says Disraeli, "all was blooming, sunshine and odour ; not a breeze disturbed the meridian splendour." But the very silence might have been thought ominous. With the measures I have named, and the Reform Bill which followed, the old Constitution fell and buried under its ruins the old Toryism in which my father and his old friend, Sir Henry, had been bred.

I was too young to feel anything even of the ground swell after the great storm ; but as I grew older and heard my father talk of it, I began to understand the shock which the Revolution of 1828-32 must have been to the great body of the clergy and gentry who experienced it. It seems to have been commonly believed by them that if the Duke of York had lived, no such revolution would have occurred ; and no doubt if the Romish disabilities had not been repealed, the nomina-

tion boroughs would not have been abolished. Mr. Disraeli has said that the Duke of Wellington "precipitated a revolution which might have been delayed for half a century, and never need have occurred at all in so aggravated a form." My father and mother used to talk as if they partly believed this, and thought that any attempt at Roman Catholic Emancipation with the Duke of York upon the throne would have been met as it was in 1806. The Tories of that date had not yet been educated by the Oxford movement. The Toryism of such men as Hurrell Froude would have been as a strange language to them. They were, or they had been brought up to be, strongly anti-Romanist. They said that Mr. Pitt, who had first proposed Emancipation, had afterwards repented, and could not be quoted against them. Such was their reading of history.

My father and mother, in 1831, were staying with the Farnhams at Quorn, a village in North Leicestershire about two miles from Loughborough, and only seventeen from Nottingham. They were there when Nottingham Castle was burned by the rioters, and Mrs. Musters was driven from her house at Colwich—which was likewise fired by the mob—and compelled to take refuge in the adjoining shrubberies at the cost of her life through exposure to the cold. The alarm spread far beyond Nottingham, and I have often heard my father tell how they sat up all night at Quorn in hourly dread of a similar attack, as both Mr. Musters and Mr. Farnham (my godfather, by the bye) were well-known Tories. It is not surprising that the impression made on men's minds by such events as these and the policy to which they were attributed should have been deep and permanent ;

nor was it likely to be effaced by the legislation which immediately followed.

Mr. Halford, Sir Henry's eldest son, was returned for South Leicestershire to the first reformed Parliament, a seat which he held for twenty-five years, when he was succeeded by Lord Curzon. He early showed himself entitled to the name of Tory in its best sense by taking up the cause of the working classes in his own county. The mantle of Mr. Sadler had fallen on him, and he led the attack on the Truck system with great persistency till the cause was finally taken up by Lord Ashley. But that it was ever taken up at all was in great measure due to Mr. Halford. His father died when I was almost a child ; but the son, the second Sir Henry, I remember well. He was a well-read man, a good classical scholar, and had a great fund of humour. He is said to have been the last of the chancleiers in the House of Commons. He could crow better than any man in the House when it was thought desirable either to deride a Ministerial speaker or stop a Parliamentary bore. This talent naturally endeared him very much to the Tory benches ; but the reformed House of Commons gradually became too respectable to appreciate this fine natural gift at its proper value ; and it soon fell into disuse, so much so that I have heard my father say it was doubtful if a single cock was to be found in the House of Commons ten years after the Reform Bill. I feel it a great privilege to have personally known the last specimen of this extinct species.

When he had given up crowing, this excellent Tory gentleman returned, like Lord Grenville, to his classics. He had a very good memory, and was very ready with his applications. I remember when I had gone out

to look for a boy who had been sent to a neighbouring railway station, and whose delay in returning led us to believe that he might have been hindered by the floods, which were out that morning, I met Sir Henry out walking, and told him what I was about. "Oh," said he, with a twinkle in his eye, "perhaps he is waiting on the other side of the brook till they go down: *Rusticus expectat*, eh?" And he was so pleased with himself for this happy application of Horace that he walked away chuckling, quite forgetting all about the boy. Another time, when an elderly friend after dinner, bemoaning the degeneracy of the age, exclaimed rather theatrically: '*Hei mihi! præteritos referat si Jupiter annos*,' Sir Henry was at once down upon him, "Oh, don't say that," he cried: "'*Canitiem galeâ premimus*.'" /

Sir Henry was a man of quick temper, and I never shall forget him one day when I was dining at Wistow, nobody else being present but he and Lady Halford, and John Halford, then an undergraduate of Trinity, Cambridge, to which seat of learning he was about to return the next day. Sir Henry had given him a cheque for his quarter's allowance that morning; and John, being in want of change, had sent the groom off on horse-back to cash the cheque for him at Leicester, without saying anything to his father about it. During dinner something led to the errand being mentioned on which the groom had been dispatched, and as it was then getting late and the man had not returned, Sir Henry was very angry with his son for sending him to Leicester with such a sum of money. Time went on, and still no mention of the messenger; and when one of the servants came into the room, John Halford asked him again whether the man had come back. "No, sir," was the

answer. "No," cried Sir Henry, "of course not. You don't expect him to come back, do you? With sixty pounds in his pocket and a good horse under him, of course he won't. He's a fool if he does." This was said while the footmen were waiting in the room to hear this estimate of their fellow-servant, who, it is almost needless to add, was a perfectly honest man and returned with the money safe enough half an hour after he had been called a fool if he did.

Sir Henry, however, was a good landlord and lenient to poachers, a subject of frequent complaint with the old gamekeeper, John Widdowson, who had watched over the Wistow game with parental solicitude for more than thirty years. Wistow was famous for its hares in those days, and when at a coursing meeting, to which the tenants and their friends were invited once a year, more than twenty hares were killed, it is on record that the good old man was moved to tears.

The next baronet, the famous rifle-shot and my own contemporary and playfellow, was made of different metal. He was a keen sportsman, and managed to have both pheasants and foxes at Wistow. He was a first-rate rider to hounds, "a Tory fox-hunter" such as it never entered Addison's head to conceive of. I spent a couple of days with him at Wistow a few years ago, and we had a two days' pheasant shooting on my native soil, every inch of which I could almost have walked over blindfolded. Agricultural depression had fallen heavily on this good old Tory family. Sir Henry, at the time I refer to, had been obliged to give up his hunters and reduce his establishment. He had then no regular keeper, but was able to show us some pheasants in the small plantations round about the Hall where,

fifty years before, I used to go bird's-nesting. When I took leave of him I think he was about to go abroad, and I never saw him again. He died in January, 1897. His younger brother, a clergyman, succeeded to the baronetcy, but not to the estates, which went to the present Lord Cottesloe, who was one of the shooting party already mentioned.

It is remarkable in what quick succession the last surviving members of the Halford family passed away. Lady Halford survived her husband only a few months ; Sir John Halford, who succeeded my father in the family living, which he afterwards exchanged for Brixworth in Northamptonshire, died in April, 1897 ; and Mrs. Pell, Sir Henry's sister, died in 1904. None of the three children left any issue, and their places know them no more. My father, who was vicar nearly sixty years, knew three generations of this family, and now both our names are gradually fading away from the memory of the villagers. As I remember them, when my father was in full health and strength, and the Halfords were undepressed by the spectacle of unlet farms, they were all very favourable specimens, I think, of English rural life. They were governed by Tory principles, and seemed to flourish on them.

Of my father, I may here say that he was intended for the law ; but, abandoning that profession, he went up to Cambridge very early in the nineteenth century, and he perfectly well remembered Lord Palmerston, who was at Cambridge at the same time, taking assiduous notes at the public lectures. While living in the Temple before he went to Cambridge, he heard Burke speak in the Warren Hastings trial, but could only remember that he thought him

rather a common-looking man. Of Sheridan he remembered nothing but his nose. He was fond of talking of those years, and knew the name of every judge upon the Bench during the time that he lived in the Temple. He served in a corps of Volunteers, though not the Devil's Own, and could tell amusing stories of what happened when they were called out to suppress a riot, the mob, I believe, having some special grudge against the cheesemongers, some of whose shops were looted. The Volunteers, however, were not very well drilled, and more than one of them received bayonet wounds from his rear-rank man. My father was also a great theatre-goer, and was fond of boasting of the many nights running he had gone to see Mrs. Siddons. Many years afterwards he found a congenial spirit in the Dean of Bangor, Dr. Cotton, who on one occasion borrowed my father's hat to go to the theatre, as he did not like to go there in his own. My father was staying at a friend's house, where the Dean happened to be dining, and as he didn't want to go to the theatre himself, he could spare his hat. I, too, remember this old Dean of Bangor very well, a most cheerful and humorous old gentleman and a good scholar. I recollect his desiring me, when a schoolboy, to replenish the fire in the words of Horace.

When my father went into the Church, he held a curacy under Dr. Rhudd, of East Bergholt in Suffolk. Dr. Rhudd was a Tory of the Tories, and in his society my father's political principles, already founded on a warm appreciation of Mr. Pitt, received their finishing touch. The Doctor's High Churchmanship took the form of intense dislike for Calvinism, and his curate

imbibed the same horror of that austere creed. Except this article of faith, I think, he bequeathed him nothing except his walking-stick, which is now in my possession, black with age. The last time I was in the neighbourhood I paid a visit to Bergholt, and inspected the parish register in the church. There I found my father's signature for the years 1809-1811, I think, in the well-known hand which never varied till he was turned eighty, when his eyesight began to fail him.

He once told me that when he first came into Leicestershire there was only service at the parish church of Kilby, before Newton Chapel was built. The Wistow servants would sometimes go to church at Kibworth, a village about three miles off. To get there they had to cross a tiny little stream which ran across the road, and could generally be easily stepped across. After a heavy rain, however, it would sometimes become quite a little brook, and the housemaids from the Hall thought nothing of taking off their shoes and stockings and wading through it bare-legged—a relic of ancient simplicity dear, of course, to the Tory mind.

One of my early recollections is of being taken to a hunt breakfast, which I regard to some extent as a Tory, or at least a Conservative institution. But I am sorry to say I was dreadfully bored by it. I was then only about eleven years old, and my father would not hear of my being put on the back of a hunter, so I rode in the carriage with the ladies. After the breakfast, where I knew nobody, we drove about from point to point to see what could be seen of the hounds, and every now and then came upon them crossing a road and the men jumping their horses in and out of it, believing themselves to be bewitching the ladies with noble

horsemanship. I remember one gentleman well on account of the melancholy end which overtook him. He rode up alongside of the carriage and talked to its occupants for a few minutes, and then, saying that he was going to show off, put his horse at the adjoining fence. He was a captain in some cavalry regiment, which he afterwards commanded, and was so cut to the heart by their behaviour in one of the great Indian battles that he put an end to his life.

"I have known men," says Thackeray, "who took a horrid delight in making boys drunk." I never encountered a monster of this kind myself, but I do remember when boys were rather encouraged to drink wine, and taught to consider it a manly thing to be able to bear a good deal. I was not brought up in this way. My father was a remarkably abstemious man, and very little wine was drunk at our table when I was a boy. But there is an association of ideas between port wine and Tory politics which I have no wish to dispel, and, as an illustration of it, I remember my godmother, a most unimpeachable Tory female, stirring up my youthful ambition by telling me *she* knew of a boy not older than myself who could drink his six glasses of "port wine and be as steady as a jug after it." These were her very words. She said "jug," mind, not "judge." Having thus briefly intimated to me in which direction the path of honour lay, she dropped the subject and left her words, and the look of scorn with which they were accompanied, to fructify in my bosom. The seed was sown in a not unkindly soil, and though choked for a time by sponge cakes, figs, and raisins, it eventually came up, and I still continue to prefer port to any other wine that can be offered to me.

Among other Tory gentry who adorned what I have fondly called Tory Arcadia, I remember Sir Arthur Hazelrigge, the descendant of an old family attached to the Parliamentary party, as the Halfords were to the Royalists. In fact, his ancestor was the well-known general of that name, who commanded a regiment of cavalry under Cromwell. But "he bore no traces of the sable strain." He was an ideal country gentleman and landlord, a sound Churchman, and a good Tory, beloved and revered by all his numerous tenantry. But he, too, had suffered from the depreciation of agriculture, which, indeed, has had a far-reaching effect, not, perhaps, anticipated a quarter of a century ago. It is not only in pocket that the country gentlemen have suffered. The lean years which reduced their incomes inevitably diminished their influence. Wealth and power and privilege may not be the highest deities to which the human mind can do homage, but they always have commanded it since the world began, and probably always will. With the loss of half his rentals, the country gentleman's hospitalities, charities, and general amenities were necessarily curtailed. With half his farms unoccupied, he lost a number of adherents, through whom his influence permeated the whole body of agricultural peasantry. He could no longer make the same figure in the county; he was no longer among the best customers of the tradesmen in his county town. With the passage of the County Government Bill of 1888 he was shorn of much of that jurisdiction which he exercised so beneficially, and which, of course, added to his importance. His position was no longer one to exercise that unconscious influence on the imagination of the rural population which the presence of a resident

aristocracy, with all its hereditary prerogatives, its antiquity, and its splendour is calculated to exert.

In a word, in too many English counties the spell was broken, and it is my firm conviction that it is this more than anything else which has caused so many English counties to exchange their old Tory representatives for Liberals. If it is said that the change is due simply to the fact that the country gentlemen can no longer practise any kind of compulsion, moral or material, on the newly-enfranchised voters, I stoutly deny it. This, of course, has had its share in producing the result, but only a small share. Had the landed proprietors in 1885 been what they were twenty years earlier, had there been no agricultural depression and no material change in the social and political position of the gentry, had the Hall and the Manor House still been kept up as of old, I don't believe that the enfranchisement of the peasantry, or anything which contributed to give them greater independence, would have severed the tie which had so long bound together the owners and cultivators of the soil in bonds of mutual goodwill, loyalty, and respect. But events have been otherwise shaped, the old proprietors have lost their hold over both tenants and labourers, and Tory Arcadia as it really once existed, though opinions may differ as to the exact date when it began to disappear, is, I fear, a dream of the past.

Mr. Froude anticipates the time when England may have lost her Empire and her commerce, and have become a nation of shepherds and herdsmen. Should that time ever come, Arcadia may in one sense return. But not as Lord Beaconsfield so eloquently said in 1864, not "the old England." The word "Arcadia" is not to be taken too seriously. I have not used it in

the present chapter to denote a kind of golden age, such as is said to have existed in the rural districts in the reign of Anne ; but rather as a short way of describing a time when between the different classes of the rural population there was no serious antagonism—when the peasantry were contented with village life, and farmer and labourer alike regarded their landlords, if sometimes with hostility, never with jealousy, or with any idea of ever stepping into their places. But perhaps the change, after all, has not been so great, and may not be so permanent, as is here suggested. And, indeed, I believe there are some English counties in which the old ties which once united all classes of the rural population are still unbroken.

The picture, however, would not be complete without a word or two of the Rector and Vicar who inhabited this pleasant land. I can confirm from my own memory what Mr. Froude has said of an earlier generation of country clergymen. What they were in the reign of George IV., that they continued to be in the reign of William, and down to a late period in the reign of his successor. These clergymen were Tories to a man, all belonging more or less to the high and dry school, slightly moistened in some instances, either by an infusion of Waverley romance, or by some percolating element of the earlier Oxford revival, which was beginning slowly to make itself felt among the parochial clergy in general. I don't mean to say that what I remember to have heard and seen among the clergy in question was said and done exclusively because they were Tories. Had there been any Whig clergymen in those parts, they would probably have talked and acted, *mutatis mutandis*, in the same manner. But there were none.

Among others whom I remember in the neighbourhood, the Rev. Richard Pelham stands out most prominently. He was rector of an adjoining village, a living worth six or seven hundred a year, the younger son of a good family, and a man of some taste and culture. He had been Captain of Westminster, and proceeded in due course to Christchurch, and when I first remember him, he had been resident in the county about ten years, and was perhaps fifty years of age. He was one of those High Churchmen in whom the coming dawn of Anglicanism was just becoming visible. He was, as I have said, a well-read man, and I can see him now sitting after dinner and sipping his port, twiddling the nutcrackers between his finger and thumb, as he pronounced *ex cathedrâ* that the Oxford men were "quite right." Not, indeed, that he was going to live up to them. He had been used to the old ways too long for that. But he recognised that they had historical truth on their side, and left it to others to practise what they taught. It was the social side of his character that was best known. He was a good fisherman, and sometimes went out with his gun, though a bad shot. He was a great diner-out and *raconteur*, and was a welcome guest at the best houses in the county. In those days a broad jest was more frequent than it is now, though suggestive conversation was much less so. When Mr. Pelham asked a young lady across the dinner table, as I heard him at a large party, whether she gartered above or below the knee, the question was thought to be in perfectly good taste, and created much merriment. He was widely and deservedly popular.

The parson of this class stood, as Mr. Froude very

truly says, "on sounder terms with his parishioners, and had stronger influence over their conduct. He had more in common with them. He understood them better, and they understood him better. . . . The forgotten toast of Church and King was a matter of course at every county dinner." And I remember a curious illustration of this which I have mentioned in another work. A well-known clergyman in our neighbourhood, of more decidedly sporting proclivities than Pelham, and sometimes seen at pigeon matches, was standing one day at the railway station while on the opposite platform stood a young curate in the most rigidly correct ritualistic costume. An old labourer whom he knew came up to Mr. Oakhurst and said, "It 'taint the likes o' you, sir, as does any harm to the Church; it's them young pups," jerking his thumb in the direction of the youthful Jesuit. This was the general view taken by the peasantry and farmers of that era. The old-fashioned clergy, if they did hunt and shoot, were in much fuller sympathy with their parishioners, both morally, socially, and religiously, than the more straitlaced ascetics who succeeded them. These in time won their way to the hearts of the people. But it took time. And even now I am afraid their influence is not equal to that of the old school, who were gentlemen first and priests afterwards.

Pelham eventually succeeded to the family estate in the south of England, but he was followed by a parson of the same kidney, who was the last specimen of a now nearly extinct class whom I can recollect. He wore coloured trousers, a cross-barred neck-cloth, was an active magistrate, and I believe at one time Chairman of Quarter Sessions. Such men as these were almost of

necessity Tories : one cannot think of them as anything else. They were most useful members of society, respected by their parishioners, and exercising a religious influence all the more effective because never unseasonably obtruded.

It must be confessed, however, that while the absence of too marked a professional spirit in the clergy I am thinking of really helped to strengthen their position, in some respects their confidence in their position, inspired by the long dominance of Toryism, the natural ally of the Church, did at times tempt some of them into vagaries and eccentricities which did no particular credit to that honourable creed. I remember one man who held a fat living and used to go to Leicester every Saturday and sell his own fruit or vegetables in the open market. I recollect another, a mechanical genius, who invented some machinery for lowering coffins into the grave. One Sunday at a funeral, the first time the new engine was made trial of, a considerable crowd collected round the grave to see how it would work. The tenant of the coffin was a woman whom, of course, they had all known. As the parishioners, especially the females, kept pressing forward, the old clergyman became impatient. "The curoosity of woman," he exclaimed, "is unbounded. Hist her up again, Jack" (to the clerk), "and when I have finished the service, you can have her up as often as you like." This was, perhaps, going a little too far ; but old Grimsby was a privileged person, and nobody, I believe, thought the worse of him for any of his peculiarities. Arcadia still retained all its proverbial simplicity, and the peasantry took much for granted when it came from the "Quality."

A good deal of simple-minded old-fashioned Toryism and churchmanship still lingers in Arcadia, even among the rising generation. Not long ago I was much amused by a conversation which I overheard at a well-known Tory club, where two quite young men were dining at a table adjoining mine. One of them had just come up to town, and his companion was inquiring about their mutual friends in the country. How was Brown? How was Jones? How was Robinson? These questions being answered, the querist bethought him of a fourth acquaintance. "Ah!" he said, "and how's old Thompson?" "Well," says the other, "we don't know quite what to make of him. He's given up hunting, and doesn't go to church, and all that sort of thing." The humour of this I thought something exquisite.

CHAPTER XIII.

TORY BOHEMIA.

Journalism in the Mid-Century—War between Tory and Liberal Journalists—James Hannay and G. A. Sala—The *Idler*—The Retort upon "S. and B."—The Company at the "Cock" and the "Cheese"—Edgar and his Love of Genealogy—Evans's—The Last Stage in Hannay's Career—Mortimer Collins—His Eccentricities—His Love of Nature—Charming a Thrush—Edward Whitty—A Bohemian who was found Reading the Commination Service—Antinomies of Character—Johnny Baker.

IT is a wide leap from the green fields and quiet villages of rural England to the murky atmosphere, incessant din, and intellectual activity of Fleet Street and the Strand. I have explained in the first chapter how I came to enter upon the career of journalism. I may now give some account of the companions to whom it introduced me.

When I first settled down in London and began to write regularly, there were two elements just beginning to mingle in the journalistic world. Journalism had not yet come to be regarded as exactly the career for a gentleman. At all events, it was not one to which in my time members of either Oxford or Cambridge University looked forward, as they looked forward to what were then known as "the liberal professions." But with the beginning of the second half of the last century a change began gradually to show itself. There had always been a certain number of highly educated gentlemen in the higher departments of the London

Press, but they might have been counted on one's fingers. Between 1850 and 1860 they had rapidly increased, and a slight feeling of jealousy had sprung up between the old rank-and-file of journalism and the newcomers from the Universities, who were supposed to give themselves airs, as well as to be gradually usurping the places so long held by a class of men differently brought up, and bred to the business from their boyhood. When once I began in earnest as a working journalist, I soon became aware of this fact.

At this time the two leading men in Bohemia, as far as I knew it, were James Hannay and George Augustus Sala. When I was first introduced to Hannay he was supposed to be a Liberal, and I think would have called himself so. He was actually regarded as such by all his brother Bohemians, and many other journalists and writers who were not of that fraternity—Mr. Hepworth Dixon, Mr. Peter Cunningham, and some others less known. By degrees, however, as Mr. Hannay became acquainted with two or three Oxford men—Mr. Sotheby for one, a first-class man, and Fellow of Exeter; William Brandt, of Oriel; Edward Wilberforce; J. G. Edgar, not a University man, but a very clever and original creature, and a red-hot feudalist—he gradually began to withdraw himself from his old associates, and ere long came out as a decided Tory and the leader of a Tory party in the kingdom of Bohemia. This change was furiously resented by those whom he had left, who called him a turncoat, and a hypocrite, one who only professed Toryism to curry favour with his fine new friends. Sala told him he was only veneered. The two parties set up two rival magazines wherewith to combat each other. The Tory periodical, owned

and edited by Mr. Edward Wilberforce, was called the *Idler*. The Liberal or Radical rival was published by Messrs. Groombridge, and at this moment I forget its name. Of course, Sala and Robert Brough were among its leading contributors. In a dialogue they introduced the *Idler*. "What is the *Idler*?" says one. "Oh, University and water," was the answer. This provoked a retort from the *Idler*, not perhaps in the best taste, but which succeeded in its main object of stinging the twin assailants to the quick. It was founded on the supposed ignorance of general literature, and classical literature in particular, unjustly attributed to the two gentlemen who are indicated by their initials, neither of whom at that time was very particular about his personal appearance.

Easy to see why S. and B.
Should hate the University;
Easy to see why B. and S.
Should hate cold water little less :
While by their works they shew their creed
That men who write should never read,
Their faces show they think it bosh
That men who write should ever wash.

Sala threatened with a fearful fate "the hound" who had written this if he could only find him.

The war thus begun was carried on with considerable acrimony. Sometimes the two parties met at the same tavern, when very high words ensued, and sometimes efforts were made at conciliation, which, if well meant, were not always judicious. I never shall forget seeing Sotheby, grandson of the poet, then an Oxford Don and the pink of neatness and propriety, walking up and down the room with Sala, and trying to persuade

that formidable humorist that University men did not despise him. Those who knew Sala will easily imagine the countenance with which he received this assurance. Sotheby's studious politeness and perseverance only enraged him all the more as smacking of condescension.

James Hannay was not a man to be easily forgotten. He never did himself justice. He was endowed by nature with a brilliant wit. He had stored his mind with the best literature, English and French, Greek and Latin. He wrote a charming style, easy without being slovenly, racy without being coarse, and never falling below a high standard of English composition. He had been in the Royal Navy, and was a midshipman on board a man-of-war when in 1840 the decks were cleared for action in expectation of an immediate collision with the French Fleet in the Mediterranean. He had received no regular education, nor had he acquired the habit of application. But he was a man of frugal tastes, and when he threw himself on the Press for a livelihood, he soon found no difficulty in providing for his simple wants. It was soon after leaving Oxford that I first made his acquaintance. Not long afterwards he married, and settled down in a house at Islington, where for the next seven or eight years he entertained his friends in a simple style after the manner of Charles Lamb. But Hannay never really worked hard. He was satisfied if he made an income sufficient for the passing day. In his admirable wife he had an excellent housekeeper, who kept everything straight, and saved her husband from all pecuniary worries. I think those were some of the happiest days of Hannay's life.

When I came to live permanently in London, I began

to see a great deal of him. We used to meet in the Reading Room of the British Museum, and go out to lunch together in a very economical style at a neighbouring public house—for it was little better—called the “Pied Bull,” which has now, alas ! been dead for many years. I remember a dinner at Blackwall, when Shirley Brooks was of the party. He and Hannay had, of course, a good deal of literary conversation, and after dinner a stranger, who had been sitting at an adjoining table, came over to Hannay’s, uninvited, saying : “ I perceived, gentlemen, from your conversation, that you were in the literary line, so I took the liberty of joining you, as I am, I assure you, lineally descended from Addison.” Hannay always described the intruder as a bagman, and, indeed, his mode of address savoured strongly of that profession. His reply was as follows “ Addison, sir, left only one child, a daughter, who was imbecile, a fact, I must allow, which does lend some colour to your pretensions ; but as she died without issue, I can only regard them as an idiotic fiction.”

Hannay was imbued with the sentiment and the romance of Jacobitism, and was very sensible of the points which it offered for literary treatment. But he went no further. With his love of the old feudal fighting days, and his appreciation of the grape combined, it was natural for him to say of the “white rose” that it was “a flower which had always required a great deal of moisture, whether wine or blood.” At the General Election of 1857 he offered himself as a Tory candidate for Dumfries against Mr. Ewart, the sitting member, an old Whig. Of course, he had no chance in those days against such an opponent ; but it is a curious thing that he had the show of hands on his

side, and I remember its being noted in a Liberal London newspaper how he had talked over a Scots mob to Toryism. So he had : for he was a brilliant speaker, and he made the most of his knowledge of Scottish character and Scottish traditions. He used to say that in Scotland you found among the people a curious mixture of feudalism and Radicalism. Hannay knew how to appeal to both. The middle class constituencies of those days cared for neither. Such talk was foolishness to them. But the people, the working men, in Scotland understood what he meant, and a considerable number of old Scottish Tories, who were still to be found in sheltered situations, gave him their support.

O noctes cænæquæ Deum ! when Hannay and Edgar, whom I have already mentioned, and a few other choice Bohemians to be mentioned hereafter, for-gathered at the "Cock"—the old "Cock," I mean : Tennyson's "Cock"—or the "Cheshire Cheese," or the old "Edinburgh Castle," then a great haunt of the Bohemian brotherhood, and talked Toryism, and pedigrees, and literature, and scholarship till the clock struck twelve and Sunday had begun, for these symposia were mostly on "Saturday at e'en." Hannay, as a rule, dined at home. But some of the other men dined at one or other of these taverns regularly ; for Clubs then were much less known than they are now, and a great number of gentlemen who now go westward for their evening meal would then have sought for it in Fleet Street. Edgar was a typical Bohemian, and always dined at such places when he dined at all, which he did not do every day in the week. This was not for want of means, but because he did his literary work best by long spells at a time, during which he only

stirred from his lodgings to go to the Museum, and drank nothing but coffee. In this last respect, perhaps, he was wanting in one attribute of Bohemia. But he made amends for his self-imposed abstinence when he broke out, and when he had no work in hand he was to be found at the "Cheese" every night of his life.

His favourite study was genealogy—the history of the great feudal families of Great Britain, and of such of their descendants as could honestly claim kin with them, and were entitled to be held of what he and Hannay used to call "the regular tap." If any man of name unknown to fame distinguished himself in arts or arms, they made desperate efforts to bring him within the charmed circle, sometimes by the dexterous transformation of a single letter, sometimes by making a wide cast and picking up the scent of him three centuries back. This to Edgar was a labour of love. He scorned to turn the vast amount of knowledge which he acquired in this way to any useful end, beyond the help it afforded him in writing books for boys, in which he was very skilful. He used this valuable stock of information, as was truly said of him, as the man-at-arms in the Middle Ages used the gold chain which he had acquired in the wars, breaking off a link or two of it now and then to supply his immediate necessities—but no more. It was curious, according to the life he led, that he should have subsisted chiefly by writing children's books; but so it was, though he had some newspaper employment subsidiary to it which made his income equal to his wants. He possessed some virtues not common in Bohemia. He was never in debt. When he got fifty pounds for a book he handed over thirty pounds of it to his landlady and kept the remainder for

himself, of which a large part, no doubt, went into the pockets of Mr. Dolamore, the genial proprietor of the "Cheshire." "I think old Edgar," said Hannay one day, "is the happiest man I know. He gets up in the morning and saunters down to the 'Mus.'" (as the Museum was fondly called in those days by its Bohemian frequenters), "and busies himself in Dugdale or Collins till four or five. Then he goes down to his newspaper office, and potters over a pedigree or an obituary notice, and writes a paragraph. Then he goes on to the 'Cheshire Cheese' and has his steak and his six tumblers, which just carry him through all his favourite ideas."

Hannay was of a more practical turn than Edgar. He looked up to Lord Derby, and was proud of having for his political chief one of such "irreproachable lineage," as the Baron of Bradwardine calls it. He admired Lord Palmerston, too, whom Edgar did not scruple to describe as a "flash Irishman."

Neither of these two men, be it remembered, nor any of their usual companions, ever dreamed of showing themselves in Society, or of seeking admittance to those fashionable assemblies to which others in every way their inferiors were readily welcomed. They were the true descendants of the Boyces and the Savages—the wild asses, as Macaulay calls them, who were untameable and seemingly incorrigible. There were degrees, however, amongst them. Dr. Johnson emerged from Bohemia, took Beauclerk's advice to purge and live cleanly "like a gentleman," and was no unwelcome figure in a lady's drawing-room. Hannay, though a thorough Bohemian at heart, was prevented by his wife from giving himself up entirely to its wild tavern life,

and when he went to Edinburgh as Editor of the *Evening Courant*, was willing to lead a life of conventional respectability. But he never lost the Bohemian *ethos*; for after his marriage, I remember hearing him say, *à propos* of Christmas dinner parties, for which he had great contempt, that "a lot of fellows ought to get together over a piece of beef and a bowl of punch." He had no idea of real domesticity; and he was most fortunate in his wife, who thoroughly understood him, and never interfered with propensities which, however inconvenient she may at times have found them, were innocent in themselves.

When I paid him a visit at Edinburgh I found him and his family all very happy. I was introduced to Alexander Smith, and we had a tavern dinner with cock-a-leekie and haggis at some house of repute, the "Cock" or the "Cheshire Cheese" of Edinburgh. It was a very jovial evening, quite in the Bohemian style, and was only marred, if at all, by Hannay's excessive love of making speeches, and of insisting on other men making them, whether they had any faculty for it or not. I have suffered dreadfully in my time from this propensity at the hands of other men as well as Hannay. It was as bad as the horrid old custom of compelling a man to sing after dinner or supper, on pain of having to swallow a tumbler of salt-and-water. I know I had to propose the health of Alexander Smith, and I believe that in sheer desperation I compared him to Shakespeare, Pope and Tennyson lumped into one. One day we rode out to Roslin and threaded Hawthornden. Of course we ascended "the High Castle rock," associated for ever with "Bonny Dundee," a favourite song of Hannay's, which he would recite as often as

an opportunity occurred ; and I remember on one occasion, when we and a party of Bohemians were having supper at Evans's, we all struck up "Bonny Dundee" at the top of our voices, to the great amusement of the company, who took it very good-naturedly, though I daresay the effect of it was very ludicrous, as everyone sang it to the tune he knew best.

Speaking of Evans's reminds me that this, too, was a great haunt of Bohemians and of those who passed to and fro between Bohemian and conventional society, and were equally at home in both. Among such men I remember Frank Talfourd, William Hale, Andy O'Brien (surnamed, when he was at Eton, Phubs, a name which somehow or other seemed to fit him remarkably well). I had known Talfourd at Oxford, and when we met again in London we became for a time pretty intimate. To Evans's often came Serjeant Ballantine, Buckstone, and Albert Smith. Talfourd, of course, who was then well known as a burlesque writer, introduced me to those three stars, and I considered it a high privilege to sit at the same table with any one of them. Buckstone, however, was so deaf that it was no use trying to talk to him ; but it was enough to hear him speak. His voice was sufficient. Talfourd, I remember, invited myself and some other Oxford friends to a Fancy Dress Ball at Lady Talfourd's. We went—I, at least in plain clothes ; and actors and actresses who came in late from the theatres did the same. I found the party rather dull, as I knew nobody, was no dancer, and had no costume to strut about in. So I left early and betook myself to the "Cock," where, in company with a congenial friend, who happened to be there, we enjoyed, till past midnight, the oysters and porter which were

served at that tavern in the good old days up to two o'clock in the morning.

When Hannay left the *Courant*—partly, I think, owing to some dispute with the proprietors, who disliked the freedom with which he wrote of some of the party leaders—he was entertained at a grand banquet, Wordsworth, Bishop of St. Andrews, taking the chair, and Professor Hill Burton (though himself a Whig) the vice-chair. On that occasion Hannay asserted what he thought ought to be the position of a party journalist, and his relations with the party leaders. “I am,” he said, “their soldier, but not their servant. I wear their uniform, but not their plush.” This distinction, loudly applauded by the audience, has always struck me as a very happy one; and it is one, I believe, that the leaders of the Tory party, at headquarters at least, have always recognised.

The mention of this dinner calls to my mind another which was given to Mr. Hannay by his literary friends in London when he left it to take charge of the *Courant*. Mr. Hepworth Dixon was in the chair on that occasion. And I am sorry to say that the dinner did not pass off without some little friction arising from that smouldering literary feud to which I have referred at the beginning of this chapter. Hannay rather resented the somewhat patronising tone in which the Chairman proposed his health, and in the course of his remarks curiously enough repeated in substance what Newman says in “*The Office and Work of Universities*,” a book which, I am sure, Hannay had never seen. He said that service in the Navy was as good an education as life in a college, and that when he joined the literary circle in London he brought with him a training which

many of its members might have envied. The Navy was his university. I can't recollect his exact words, but this was the pith of what he said.

At another dinner, given him when he left Edinburgh by the staff and business employees of the *Courant*, he compared himself (as Editor of that fogified organ) to "a solitary centurion left in defence of the wall of Hadrian." He came back to London in 1865 and wrote for the *Pall Mall Gazette*, just then launched by Mr. Frederick Greenwood. Another of his witticisms that I recollect was delivered about this time when a deputation from the licensed victuallers waited on him with a request that he would advocate their cause against the grocers who were licensed to sell wine as well as tea. "We are fighting," said the spokesman, "for our own rights, the right to sell tea as well as wine." "Yes," said Hannay, "I see—it's your grape against their canister."

But Hannay came back to London an altered man, and he sometimes regretted that he had ever left it. The death of his first wife—a heavy sorrow to him—changed him still more, and when he accepted from the Government the consulship at Barcelona, one reason for his doing so, I think, was because he felt himself changed, and less and less able to apply himself to regular work. He had also at that time some pecuniary embarrassments, which made a change of climate desirable; and as I first saw him in Bohemia, so I last saw him on a spot with which the denizens of that region are only too familiar. I never saw him again, but I had several letters from him, one written at a time when his second wife was on her death-bed, in which he says: "I have taken a charming country house, a tower or 'Torre'

on the slopes behind the city, with a garden full of orange trees, and endless classical flowers of all kinds, and where the nightingale sings in the ivy, as at Colonos. She [his wife] delights in the change ; but, somehow, the very beauty of the place makes it all the sadder." This was written in 1870. In another letter he says of the Spaniards that "they smoke everywhere but in the kitchen chimney." Hannay was never more really reconciled to his exile than Ovid was. He frequently spoke of paying a visit to London, but he never did, and he died at Barcelona in the year 1873.

I subjoin an extract from another of his letters from Barcelona. The "citizen of a greater State" is, of course, himself :—

Those Yankees are devils of fellows, with plenty of money, given to hospitality, and many of them as good conservatives as you or I. The skipper of the *Wachusett*, familiarly known in the service as "Brassy Bushman," is justly described by his officers as a caution to porcupines. I dined with him, and the liquoring was considerable. With their queer Yankee frankness, he told me that his father had had some Red Indian blood in his veins, which accounted for some traits in the paternal character. "After my brother's death," said the skipper, "he became vindictive and misanthropical and neglected his business." A sentence which stuck in my memory, knowing as I did a citizen of a still greater State whose history it partially described ! To these accidents of warships' visits—and passing tourists—we owe our only social recreation. T'other day I talked for a quarter of an hour, with whom think ye, Keb ? the ex-Duke of Tuscany—a Hapsburg and cousin of the Kaiser. He is rich, unmarried, accomplished, and comes every summer to a palace he has in the Balearic Isles. I have been advising Bessie, who is now a fine lass of seventeen, to set her cap at him, and have pointed out how well it would look in the *Dumfries Courier*. Galloway would be convulsed, and I would send all my old classical and feudal friends little dona of real Tokay !

Bessie was Hannay's eldest daughter, whom I remember as a very handsome child ; but it is now many

years since I set eyes on her. She is happily married, I believe, but not to the Grand Duke.

Hannay I shall always remember in connection with my own sojourn in Bohemia.¹ When I think of that life, I think of him and Edgar, and not of anybody else. But I knew plenty more, who, if not equal to Hannay, were thoroughgoing Bohemian Tories. There was Mortimer Collins, a remarkably clever versifier, who ran to seed and died comparatively young, partly no doubt in consequence of the unnatural life he led, to say nothing of his convivial excesses. I knew him first as a contributor to the *Idler* aforesaid, in which he wrote some very pretty verses called "The Ivory Gate."

Then the oars of Ithaca dip so
Silently into the sea,
That they wake not sad Calypso,
And the hero wanders free.
He ploughs the ocean furrows
At war with the words of fate,
And the blue tide's low susurrus
Comes up through the ivory gate.

He was a ferocious Tory and a castigator of everything which he considered, rightly or wrongly, to savour of cant—as often, perhaps, wrongly as rightly. He wrote a comic drama in imitation of "The Birds" of Aristophanes, in which he has the following undeniably witty jest at the expense of Positivism, it being nothing to the purpose that he did not understand what it was.

There was an ape in the days that were earlier;
Centuries passed and his hair became curlier;
Centuries more gave a thumb to his wrist,
Then he was man, and a Positivist.

He was a curious creature to look at. He always dressed in the same way, winter and summer. He wore, as far

as I remember, an ordinary dark morning coat with a white waistcoat and often a pair of rather short white trousers, neither of the two garments looking as if it could ever have been clean. He usually wore a round hat, and carried a parcel of books under his arm. In this guise he might have been seen prowling about the newspaper offices, or, if in cash, driving from one to another in a hired brougham, still the same dirty, disreputable-looking object that I have described. He was a tall, well-made, and rather good-looking man, though the leer with which he usually greeted you on meeting him in the street was not an agreeable salutation. I have no reason to doubt that he was sincere in his Conservative politics and in his dislike of Liberals and Radicals. But there was sometimes an air of affectation in his political utterances, and the twinkle of his eye and the expression of his mouth every now and then seemed to say : " I'm one humbug, and you're another, and we both know it." One could always tell when Collins had just come down from a favourable interview with his publisher. After making shift for a dinner as well as he could for months, he might be met some day with his pocket full of money, hurrying off, perhaps in company with his wife, to lunch at Birch's or the " Ship " on turtle and punch and champagne.

But there was another side to his character which presented an interesting ethical problem. This rattling, boisterous man, the loudest laughter in the tavern, coarse in his language, coarse in his tastes, and seemingly only in his native element among the lowest circles of Bohemia, was, nevertheless, a sincere lover of nature, fond of birds and flowers, and of taking long walks among the woods adjoining the little Berkshire village in which he

had made himself a nest. Here he used to retire after his "fling" in the metropolis; and here I visited him more than once. If I had gone much oftener I should not be alive to tell the tale. Talk went on till two or three o'clock in the morning—talk not always of the most refined character. The next morning lunch and breakfast seemed to be knocked into one, cold roast beef and port wine being the viands on which Collins's guests were supposed to break their fast, as Collins did himself. A walk in the afternoon passed away the time till dinner, which was of an equally solid and substantial character with breakfast. Collins, I believe, only worked at night, and when he slept I don't know. He used to sit down to write at ten o'clock at night, and I suppose he went on till about six, and then slept, perhaps, till eleven or twelve. When he had a guest in the house, however, he took a holiday, for he was throwing up pebbles at my bedroom window between nine and ten in the morning.

To illustrate his fondness for birds, and the confidence with which he inspired them, he showed me a thrush's nest, in which the old bird was sitting. She suffered Collins to approach her and gently stroke her back for some minutes, and probably would not have moved had he stood there longer. This I thought very curious. To see this great, rough, loud roisterer, redolent of Fleet Street toddy and Bohemian slang, suddenly transformed into a child of Nature, and capable of charming a bird upon her nest, was a kind of revelation.

One of Collins's favourite amusements at Knole Hill was to stand at his garden gate on Sunday morning and watch the people going to and returning from church. The different countenances which they wore on these

occasions respectively afforded him intense delight. They went with gloomy faces and came back with very cheerful ones. This Collins interpreted in his own fashion as a sign that the congregation congratulated themselves on having discharged a painful duty and got it over. I suggested to him a different construction—namely, that they might have heard something at church which did them good. This probability did not seem to have occurred to him. The last thing I heard of Collins was that he had been selected as secretary to some newly formed company at, I think, Liverpool, as being calculated from his size, his bearing, and the loudness of his voice to “overawe committees.”

Another of the children of Bohemia whom I knew well, and perhaps the ablest man among them, except Hannay, was Edward Whitty. He was not a Tory, it is true; but he did not enrol himself in the ranks of the opposite party. He sat, so to speak, upon the cross-benches. He first made himself famous by “The Stranger in Parliament,” a series of papers contributed to the *Leader*, a weekly journal owned and conducted by Mr. Pigott. These articles, constituting a fresh departure in journalism, were published in the early 'fifties and attracted general attention. Whitty was a great friend of mine, and outside the circle of my immediate *sodales*, as Hannay called them, I thought him the best of the Bohemians. He was a Roman Catholic, but so accustomed to look at the humorous side of public questions that it was easy to talk with him without lapsing into controversy. But he had rather confused ideas about English politics; and I remember in one of his books, after drawing a highly coloured picture of the state of the Haymarket at two o'clock in the

morning, in those days the rendezvous of the demi-monde and their admirers, he cries out, "And bishops sleep in their beds," etc. As I asked, when noticing his book in the press, "Where should bishops be at two o'clock in the morning, but in their beds? He wouldn't have had them in the Haymarket, would he?" Whitty, however, if not a profound reasoner, was a most amusing companion, and he had all the qualities of a true Bohemian: all the wit, all the weaknesses, all the carelessness about money, and all the generosity with which they give it to a friend in need.

He took the editorship of the *Northern Whig* at Belfast in 1857; but, not succeeding, he ultimately went to Australia, and there, I think, he died in the year 1860. He was not reckless or slovenly like Collins, nor addicted to six tumblers like Edgar; but he knew nothing of any other society than that of Bohemia, and lived in it contentedly as long as he was in London. One of his fellow tribesmen, who shall be nameless, once delighted Whitty very much by the reply which he gave to a magistrate who made some caustic remarks upon the effect of gin-drinking on literature. The gentleman in question came before him as a witness, not a prisoner, to give evidence in favour of some friend who had got into trouble on his way home from the "Cheshire Cheese." The witness, who had been drinking gin punch with him up to a late hour, was required to state in what condition his friend was when he left that tavern. His evidence, however, was of such a confused character that the magistrate evidently thought that the witness had been as drunk as the prisoner. "Don't you find, sir," said the magistrate with great severity, "that your books"—for the witness was an

author—"smell of gin?" "They do," was the reply, "and they sell in consequence."

I remember two or three more who, though often in Bohemia and mixing freely with the natives, were not of the true breed, but who, in their avoidance of polite society and their devotion to the tavern life, resembled them so much that they may well find a place among my memories. One such was a man of good family in the West of England, a staunch Tory, a good scholar, and a sound Churchman, yet addicted to what Johnson pleasantly calls the lighter vices. He lived in chambers and announced that he had entirely given up going out to dinner because he could not bear the trouble of dressing. He was, however, a thorough gentleman. He was at Westminster and Christchurch, and knew Homer and Horace thoroughly. I quote him now as a solitary instance of Bohemian piety surviving in such incongruous surroundings. He, too, was a great frequenter of the "Cock." And I remember his being found one evening at the time of the Paris Commune sitting in a box by himself with a tumbler of punch by his side, and solemnly reading the Communion Service. He thought the outbreak of the Commune was a righteous retribution following the social wickedness of the Second Empire, for he had been given to understand there were not ten righteous men or women to be found in Paris. So strange a mixture of open and avowed profligacy with unaffected religious feeling I never met with, nor heard of, unless it was in Steele himself, to whom the above-mentioned words of Dr. Johnson were applied.

I suppose, however, that such cases are in reality far from uncommon; for, as we all know, men's lives

do not always correspond to their beliefs, even when these are perfectly sincere. But there was something more than this in the very blended character of my friend. His evil life he led in perfect good faith, without, I believe, seeing any harm in it, or wishing to disguise it. His religious spirit was perfectly simple and unaffected ; there never was a man, either in Bohemia or out of it, with less taint of hypocrisy about him. The blend was quite unique.

A very popular inhabitant of Tory Bohemia was Sutherland Edwards, who, indeed, was at home in every clime and in every circle. He and Hannay had been free of the literary brotherhood long before I knew them, and had tales to tell distantly reminding one of Johnson and Savage. I first won Edwards's regard by saying of Mr. Gladstone many long years ago that he was the kind of man to dine at two o'clock and have an egg with his tea ; not that I supposed him actually to do this, but that such was his temperament—a supposition, I believe, not founded on fact. The Bohemians of those days were occasionally *impransi*, and Edwards wrote some verses commemorative of a consultation in which various schemes for procuring that day's meal were discussed and abandoned. There is a certain humour about them which, however, may not be tasted by everybody. I only remember the last stanza :—

There's Jones: he has a joint at five;
But then it's such a way,
I think we'll have an early tea,
We cannot dine to-day.

A great friend of Edwards and Hannay and myself was Dr. Steele, always a welcome guest in Bohemian

circles, a good scholar, a capital talker, and a most amiable and agreeable man. He was on the staff of the *Lancet* for thirty years. He was strong in Horace, and wrote very fluent alcaics worthy the countryman of Buchanan. I mention this to show once more that Bohemia was not barbarous, as Boileau supposed England to be till he saw Addison's Latin verses.

I must conclude this chapter with one more specimen of the genus, who, without being an all-round Bohemian, was good enough for me, and, without being a declared Tory, wrote for a Tory paper, and practically belonged to that party. Johnny Baker was a distinguished classical scholar, but he washed up in London as a journalist some years after he left the University. His proceedings were peculiar. He would write well and brilliantly for, say, three or four months at a stretch, at the expiration of which time he would rush one day into his Editor's room and declare his intention of taking a holiday forthwith. "I'm off into the country," he would say; "shan't leave my address either with you or anybody else. Nobody"—with a chuckle—"will be able to find me." And off he went, burying himself in some obscure public-house in a remote part of the country, and drinking steadily for weeks together. When he had had enough he would return to town as suddenly as he had left it, give himself a hot bath, and turn up at the newspaper office the next day, clean, sensible, and ready to begin work again directly. The drink seemed to have no effect upon him at all, so far as one could judge.

I don't know whether this wild country still exists, or has been disforested. I have not taken my readers, nor did I venture myself, into some of its innermost

recesses, where in those days it was said that if a man had shown himself in evening dress, he would have been torn to pieces. I am not ashamed to say I enjoyed my own experience of it very much ; but perhaps I only saw the bright side of it. Anyway, the memories of Bohemia transcend the memories of Mayfair, and are equal, I think, to those of Arcadia, though very different in kind.

CHAPTER XIV.

TORY CLUBS.

The Tumbler and its Leading Spirits—The Rambler—Installation at Dick's—Witty Irish Members—Jack Ormsby—His Narrow Escape from Drowning—His Liking for Practical Jokes—Toryism and Scholarship—Gowen Evans—Sotheby—Trevor: a Loud Snorer—His Cynicism—George Danvers and the Sub-Editorial Nose—Henry Fawcett—Twenty Years Afterwards—The Canning Club—The Cecil—The Junior Carlton and St. Stephen's.

I HAVE been associated with the foundation of three Tory clubs, one of which exists still. The others, though not nominally and ostentatiously Tory, deserve the title, because four-fifths of the members belonged to that party. I am not going to take my readers into the august penetralia of the Carlton or White's—*in tenui labor*—nor into the first institution of this character to which I belonged. It ought more properly to have come under the head of Bohemia, and I am afraid that its habits were of somewhat too convivial a cast to find favour with this degenerate age. Its name was the Tumbler. Hannay and Edgar, of whom I have had something to say in the chapter on Tory Bohemia, were its leading spirits, and they generally succeeded in checking any tendency to Liberalism or Radicalism which the conversation might betray. I think the Tumbler only lasted one year, but from its loins sprang another, which had a much longer lease of life, and numbered in its ranks men who afterwards made some

figure in the world. It was not entirely devoted to the rites of Bacchus, which caused a former member of the Tumbler and the nephew of a Bishop to say to me, with scorn and derision, when I explained the nature of the new club to him, "Ah, I see: the Tumbler with a little water in it." He refused to join it, though he was a very pronounced Tory, with a pleasant wit—as in his reply to one who was asserting that the French Revolution had started a new order of things in Europe, and that you couldn't go behind it. "I wish I could," he said; "I'd lend it a toe." However, we had to go on without this agreeable gentleman, and when I tell my readers at once that this club met every night from November 1st to August 1st, and that it lasted nine years, I think they will agree with me that it must have had some salt in it.

It was called the Rambler, and when it was at its fullest numbered some three-and-twenty members—barristers, journalists, men of letters, artists, Fellows of Colleges, of whom about fifteen were declared Tories, and of the rest I can only remember two who ever called themselves anything else. We drank the health of Lord Derby and of Disraeli solemnly every Saturday night, which was the guest night, and during the week many vigorous onslaughts on our foes and ingenious defences of our friends were the work of Ramblers. Our place of meeting when we finally settled down was just what the home of such a club should be. We had tried one or two others first. We thought the old "Mitre," in Fleet Street, a respectable tavern where you could get a good dinner and good wine, would suit us. The venerable name of Johnson, too, seemed to point it out as the proper resort of a Tory club. But,

for some reason or other, it did not please us, and after trying another in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden we ultimately fixed upon Dick's, that famous tavern whither Steele took his party from Shire Lane, where Cowper, when living in the Temple, came to breakfast in his dressing-gown, and where Mr. Bungay "invited Mr. Finucane and Mr. Trotter to cut their mutton" with him and talk over the new evening paper to be brought out by that enterprising publisher. Dick's was a house with a history, and when the Ramblers took up their abode there it was fairly prosperous. Our club room was a large room upstairs with windows looking out on Hare Court, and two or three of us generally dined in the coffee room.

For the first few years we had among us two or three very pleasant Irish law students, all educated at Trinity College, Dublin, well-born, cultivated gentlemen with no signs about them of that scarcity of coin which it has pleased some ill-natured satirists to regard as a frequent characteristic of their countrymen in London. They were well-read and witty men, and one of them (Whitley Stokes) is now among the first Celtic scholars of the day. He was in India for nineteen years, and did not return till the Rambler was no more. The others, all but one, went back to Dublin to practise at the Irish Bar, and Dick's was duller for the want of them.

Another of the Irish party, also from Trinity, Dublin, unlike the others, had come to stay. He was not a law student. He still had some little landed property in Ireland—all that was left to him out of a considerable estate when the Encumbered Estates Act had done with it. On this he lived, with such addition to his income as he could make by writing; for

he was a very clever and humorous essayist and a great favourite with Douglas Cook, the first Editor of the *Saturday Review*. I am speaking of that good Irish Tory, John Ormsby, one of my dearest friends, and one of the best men to go about with—as I once heard someone say of Jack Mytton—that I ever met. He was of an old Anglo-Irish family, the son of an old Peninsular man, and grandson of the Colonel Ormsby who was described by the *Times* in 1798 as having been “very busy among the rebels.” My friend would have made a fine light cavalryman; but his lot was otherwise ordained, and it was good for us at Dick’s that it was so; for he was the life and soul of the Ramblers, and a very constant attendant.

I did a good deal of “going about” with Jack, as we always called him. I remember one experience in particular. I don’t know how it happened, but once in the middle of June we found ourselves about five o’clock in the morning on London Bridge. It was a beautiful bright morning, and the river looked lovely. We were neither of us inclined to go to bed; but we were getting hungry, and at last the idea occurred to one of us that we might go and breakfast at Billingsgate. We had often dined there at the fish dinner; so we knew where to go, and a capital breakfast we had in the room with the fish salesmen. Such coffee and such broiled salmon I have rarely tasted. I tell this story without any compunction; for, according to Jack’s namesake in “Coningsby,” no Tory ought to be ashamed of being up all night. We got our breakfast about seven, and smoked and looked at the market till about nine, when we slowly strolled back by way of Cheapside and Newgate, till we reached Holborn Hill, where we parted,

Jack to his chambers in the Temple and I to mine in Gray's Inn.

This mention of Billingsgate reminds me of another curious trait in the character of the gentleman who was found reading the Commination service.* He took his two sisters, two country girls, daughters of a wealthy clergyman, to dine at the fish dinner at four o'clock p.m., and was very much astonished that they refused to stay when long clay pipes and gin punch were produced.

To return to Jack Ormsby: another time he was anxious that I should go with him to a prize fight, which I agreed to, but was prevented at the last moment. He himself wrote a graphic account of it in the *Cornhill*, and gave an equally lively description of it at Dick's when my Commination friend, who, as I have said, knew his Horace, happened to be present. The fight took place somewhere down the river, and, of course, on board the steamer there was the usual concourse of roughs and men who made you feel glad that you had left your watch at home. Someone whom Ormsby knew told him that he kept a sovereign in his boot. "Ha!" said our classical gentleman, "*licet superbis ambules pecunia*."

We very nearly lost our dear Jack during the early Rambler days. Hannay, who was not a member of the club, but who was continually mixing with us, proposed to Stokes, Ormsby, and one or two others that they should come down to see him, I think at Southend, where he had gone with his wife. They went, and Hannay took them out for a sail. Someone suggested bathing, and Ormsby and Stokes each took a header

* See *ante*, p. 189.

into the sea. After they had been swimming about for a short time, what was their horror to see the boat gradually receding from them. Whether Hannay had done it for a joke, or whether from sheer thoughtlessness, I never knew ; but, fortunately, he was made aware of the situation in time, and just picked up poor Ormsby when he was nearly exhausted. I think if Ormsby had been drowned the Rambler would have ceased to exist.

Ormsby at that time used to visit his property in Mayo every year, and stay at the old house, Gortnor Abbey, which has since been turned into an hotel ; and while he was in London he often received letters from his tenants with various complaints or petitions, very often of the most grotesque character, which their landlord would bring down to the Ramblers and read to us. One poor fellow required his landlord to compensate him for the loss of his ear, which some Mike or Pat upon the estate had "spited off." The relics of Jack's property came to an end at last, and Gortnor knew him no more ; but he did not leave the Temple for some years after this, and after the Ramblers had dispersed, many an evening I spent with him in King's Bench Walk, listening to his talk about Ireland, or Spain, or Africa. I remember his coming back from Algeria with a face burned to the colour of a new brick, only to tell us, however, that he had not succeeded in shooting a lion, but had only heard one roar in the distance. In Spain he had explored Castile on foot, and so prepared himself for that translation of "Don Quixote" which was almost his last literary undertaking. His health broke down soon after, and he died in, I think, the year 1887.

He was a man whom it was refreshing even to look

at, and had a humour of his own, which was always finding vent, no matter what the subject. He wrote a good deal for the *Saturday Review* when that journal was at the height of its reputation, and some of his papers in *Fraser* and the *Cornhill* were quite equal to Charles Lamb. I may mention two in particular, one on Street Boys and another on Loose Men, brim full of fun, and the last especially showing a talent for character-drawing which many more eminent men might have envied, and which, had he made the most of it, might have permanently enriched him. He was a good Spanish and German scholar, and his translations from both languages were highly praised by unimpeachable judges. He could write verse as well as prose, and an imitation of Browning's "Through the Metidja to Abd-el-Kadr" in his "Rambles in North Africa" is worthy to rank with Bon Gaultier. He was as clever with his pencil as with his pen, and illustrated some of his own books with great skill and humour. In Jack, if ever in any man, was the *mens sana in corpore sano*. He was a well-known mountaineer, and had climbed some of the highest peaks in Switzerland. He had gone for bears in the Pyrenees, and stalked chamois on the Alps.

Ormsby was at home in all kinds of society, and delighted to visit every scene in which human nature could be studied. I have told about his visit to a prize fight, and I must add a brief description of what he saw at Greenwich Fair. This delighted him. Standing outside one of the booths, which was densely packed with a crowd to whom it barely afforded standing room, he observed that the figures of those pressed up against the canvas walls within were very clearly delineated on that material. One unhappy man or boy—he never knew which, but I

suppose the latter—was so tightly squeezed against the canvas that the part of him which some philosophers assert to have been intended by Nature for the reception of punishment protruded very visibly, and offered a temptation which a barbarous wag outside was unable to resist. He carried in his hand a thin switch cane, which he applied vigorously to the person of the poor wretch within, for whom, of course, there was no escape. The contortions of the miserable victim, as every stroke told upon the canvas, which was quite “taut,” his unavailing writhings, and vain attempts to straighten himself, used to be described by Jack with infinite gusto. A kinder-hearted man never breathed. But there is a certain class of humorists—I have encountered several of them—who are at the mercy of their predominant faculty, and who, when once their keen sense of the ludicrous is roused, are oblivious for the moment of every other consideration. I am afraid my friend Jack was one of these from his youth up ; for the stories which he had to tell of his school-days discovered the same propensity at work, and recorded the sufferings at his hands of many inoffensive beings.

Jack had these little weaknesses, but he was, in the best sense of the word, “a choice spirit.” His Irish wit and his English common-sense made him a delightful companion at all times, whether gaiety or gravity was uppermost ; and his sound Tory principles, coupled with his very wide sympathies, made him an ideal politician in the eyes of the enlightened circle with whom Palmerston was nearly as great a favourite as Derby. Palmerston was a man after Ormsby’s own heart, and the Rambler Tories in general regarded him with a friendly eye. The geniality of the man captivated them. But

there were some among them who looked further ahead and considered what his political conduct was likely to lead to in the future. The Ramblers saw even at that early date what a splendid opportunity had been lost, both in 1855 and in 1858, of forming a powerful Conservative Government, and there were those who regarded Lord Palmerston as the chief obstacle to it. Others threw the blame almost exclusively on Gladstone.

After the Dublin Ramblers, I come to the Oxford and Cambridge men who figured in the club's catalogue. Brandt, one of the foremost among them, a most uncompromising Tory, who repudiated Palmerston, was a man of great intellectual powers, but of very original habits. He was a scholar of his college at Oxford, and second for the Hertford scholarship; and illness alone prevented him from taking high honours in the final examination. He was, it is needless to say, an excellent classical scholar—and scholarship, by many of the Ramblers, was considered to be a kind of handmaid of Toryism. If we go far enough back we shall find that some of our best-known scholars, such as Addison, Gray, and Dr. Parr were Whigs; but later, after the alliance between the Whigs and the Radicals, the former seem to have put Greek and Latin in the background in deference to their new friends. Thus Lord Wellesley, Lord Grenville, Lord Derby, and Mr. Canning came to be regarded as the chief representatives of classical scholarship among statesmen. It was known, or believed, that Radicals looked with an evil eye on the Universities, and that in the lower strata of that party classical culture was thought to savour of aristocratic insolence. Of course, a number of young men just fresh from Oxford and

Cambridge, or nearly so, and already enlisted on the Tory side, took up the challenge readily. Some of us contributed Latin verses to the "Horæ Tennysonianæ," a little volume highly commended by the late Mr. Calverley. Brandt translated the "De Coronâ" of Demosthenes. Several of our other members had distinguished themselves at one or other University. White was a Fellow of New College and first classman, and won the Latin Essay prize. Sotheby was a first-class man and gained the Latin verse prize at Charterhouse and the English essay at Oxford. Powell, when elected to an open scholarship at Lincoln, wrote a piece of Latin prose which Mark Pattison said you could hardly distinguish from Cicero. I ran second for the Latin verse myself at Oxford. Frank Conington, a brother of the Professor, and Henry Wadham were Fellows of Corpus. Sotheby and Charles (now Sir Charles) Turner were Fellows of Exeter. Roberts of Jesus, now Sir Owen Roberts, and Clerk of the Clothworkers' Company, was also one of us, and so too was Lomer of Oriel, who, but for failing health, promised soon to be leader of the Western Circuit. He was a regular leader writer on the *Spectator* in its palmy days, and was a Liberal. But he was well read in literature, and a good talker on literary questions. A. G. Marten, for some years member for the town of Cambridge; D. V. Durell, and Henry Fawcett, of Trinity Hall, afterwards Consul-General and judge in the Supreme Court at Constantinople, represented Cambridge. All these men, I think, except Durell, were either regular Tories or men who, if they did not call themselves by that name, were averse to calling themselves by any other.

I had nearly omitted Gowen Evans, who, I think,

was a Tory when he joined the Club. He took honours in mathematics, but he went out to Melbourne as manager of the *Argus*, and came back a rabid Tory, for whom I wasn't half good enough. But by that time the Rambler had departed. The principal Ramblers who were not Oxford or Cambridge men were Charles, now Sir Arthur Charles, formerly a judge of the High Court, and afterwards Dean of Arches, who was educated at the London University and was a good scholar, as well as an excellent lawyer. Next to him comes Dutton Cook, the well-known dramatic and art critic ; and last, but not least, R. A. Trevor, in whose veins it was whispered ran royal blood.

Thus it will be seen we had a tolerably good mixture, and some very good conversation might have been heard in that upper room at Dick's, alike on books, plays, and politics. I remember one or two keen contests between the Lake School and the Popian. The Irishmen, I think, were strictly Wordsworthian. Griffiths, whom I have not yet named, another Dublin man, afterwards Attorney-General at the Cape, was strong against Pope. Lomer, though a Liberal, defended him stoutly, and spoke highly of the eighteenth century school. I remember his saying that the old heroic metre, as written by them, was the noblest in the language. Brandt was a great Shakespearian. Durell was a formidable opponent on historical questions. He had a knack of reading up particular points and then biding his time to come down on some man who spoke of them only from his general information. I only got the better of him on one or two occasions : once about Nelson and the Mediterranean Fleet, and once when he roundly asserted, and stuck to it, that

the battle of Salamanca was fought after the siege of Burgos. But he generally came to an argument so well prepared that he was rarely caught tripping. Dutton Cook used to bring us all the theatrical news, which he often enlivened with some neat little witicism. Sotheby was our Society member, and when he came in from some West-End party, faultlessly attired in evening dress, Cook likened him to Lord Glossmore in *Money*, and by that name he was known among us ever afterwards. He was a highly cultivated and accomplished man, and an article which he wrote on De Quincey in *Fraser* is one of the best accounts of that author that I am acquainted with, though De Quincey is one of my books and I have read most that has been written about him, and have written something myself. Sotheby once proposed that he should translate Rémusat, and that I should do the political notes. I wish the design had been carried out, but it died away.

Trevor, I should say, was, next to Ormsby, the most prominent member of the Rambler. His Toryism was unimpeachable, as became his ancestry. He was one of that good old school who are accustomed to say, "Let's have no nonsense," or perhaps "no d——d nonsense" would be more like him. In theology he was not deeply read; but his instincts kept him very straight. He regarded such books as "Essays and Reviews" as an utterly unprofitable waste of human ingenuity. He would have agreed with Dr. Johnson that "most schemes of political improvement are very laughable things." In a word, his philosophy was the same as that of honest Ben Winthrop in "Silas Marner," who said to Macey, tailor and parish clerk, who was apt

to be critical, "Ah, Mr. Macey, you and me are two folks. When I've got a pot of good ale I like to swallow it, and do my inside good, 'stead o' smelling and staring at it to see if I can find fault wi' the brewing." He agreed with the Catechism, though not altogether satisfied with the station in life in which he found himself, as he thought Government treated its servants rather scurvily. Yet, I believe, he did his duty there as efficiently as if his pay had been doubled. He considered that his duty towards himself consisted in getting as much good out of this life as he possibly could—good meaning with him, as Emerson says it means with Englishmen in general, good to eat. He had a royal appetite, and as it was quite contrary to his theory of life to place any check upon it, he increased in bulk every day. But, bless you, Trevor did not care about that. I remember a lady who sat next him at dinner telling him she didn't like fat people, and then nervously correcting herself: "Oh, I don't mind fat men, you know." Trevor just looked over his shoulder at her with the peculiar chuckle which became him so well, and made no other answer. I have often envied men who have this particular gift. It helps them out of many situations, and often has all the effect of a successful repartee.

I never heard of Trevor being out of countenance but once, and that was when he was on a walking tour in Ireland with Ormsby. They arrived late at a small country inn, which was quite full, and a bed was made up for Trevor in the bar. The next morning, at breakfast in the coffee-room, he heard one man say to another that he had often been told that the Irish kept their pigs in the house, but he never knew it till then. The fact

is that Trevor's snore was something dreadful. I have heard Sala say that it almost frightened him. Trevor, who was conscious of this infirmity, of course knew what was meant, and kept his eyes steadily fixed on his plate till the subject dropped.

Trevor was as hospitable as he was convivial, and among the good things of this life he included literature. He could hold his own in conversation with journalists and reviewers, and one often met interesting people in his rooms, such as Shirley Brooks, Hood, Sala, who long remained under the impression that I wrote the "Christian Year," Stigant of the *Edinburgh Review*, Charles Austin of the *Times*; and once I met Sir Squire and Lady Bancroft at lunch at his rooms in St. James's Street. He died at a comparatively early age, and I should say without an enemy in the world. His sallies were never personal, and he was acceptable in every class of society and among all sorts and conditions of men. As a specimen of his peculiar cynicism, I may quote what he said to a friend of mine about a mutual acquaintance who was thought to be living rather beyond his means. "Pooh!" said Trevor; "his income keeps him very well, and, of course, he won't be such a d——d fool as not to die in debt." Thackeray ought to have met Trevor. He would have made something of him. He often reminded me of Lord Steyne. When Mrs. Rawdon tells Lord Steyne that they have ruined poor Briggs, Rawdon Crawley having borrowed all her legacy: "Ruined her?" said his lordship; "then why don't you turn her out?" That was Trevor all over. Not that he would have done it. But such was his vein. It was a kind of talk highly relished in club smoking rooms, whether Whig or Tory.

Trevor also had a good voice, and was never unwilling to oblige the company with a song. His *répertoire* was, however, more racy than select, and would have driven Colonel Newcome out of the room. His ditty was not always acceptable even to the very catholic tastes which prevailed at Dick's. In that and other things Trevor belonged to a school of conviviality with whom wit was wit in whatever language it was clothed. In the days when clubs were often only dining and drinking associations, it is probable that at an early period of the evening men ceased to be very nice about their jokes. I was once told by a retired Colonel who had mixed in that kind of company that at a club in Covent Garden he once heard the Chairman, a well-known *viveur*, tell the waiter at twelve o'clock at night to put half a dozen more of the '20 port on the table.

George Danvers was a Rambler whose conversation smacked rather of the bush and the gold diggings than of the Cave of Harmony or the Back Kitchen. He was an Old Etonian. But for some reason or another he had taken to roughing it. He had been both in Australia and in California, and the conditions of life and the maladies to which men were exposed in those golden regions he described with a frankness which I cannot venture to imitate. He got off a murderer before a Yorkshire jury by making light of being knocked down, and asking the jury whether it was not a thing which every gentleman had to undergo in the course of his life. He was so elated with his success that he went out to try his fortune at the Indian Bar. But he never returned. Everything else failing, he went back to Australia, whence he wrote to say that his "ax" was his best friend, and there, I believe, he died.

While in England he tried his hand at journalism and wrote some sporting articles for the *Saturday Review*, which were duly licked into shape by his friend the sub-editor. Danvers after a time began to kick at this kind of supervision, which he called "coming Molly over him," and announced his intention of making his friend acquainted with his feelings on the subject. The sub-editor was gifted with a large nose, and Danvers, when asked what he meant to say to him, replied: "I shan't say nothing. I shall come down on his old nut in a way that'll astonish him." This gentle intimation that his sub-editorial friend had gone too far was never, I think, adopted.

Saturday was the Ramblers' guest night, when members introduced their friends. I think that once or twice we had the honour of Mr. John Morley's company. He was then living in the Temple. Greenwood came sometimes, and also Dante Rossetti, whom I knew very well, and was always very glad to meet. Then we, most of us, had supper, which we never did on ordinary week days, and now and then Brandt, who rather fancied himself as an orator, would make a speech. But oratory was not encouraged, and so much the better. At the end of the session, usually about the middle of June, we had the club dinner, all dining together, sometimes at Dick's, sometimes at Cremorne, sometimes at the Albion, once frequented by Captain Strong.

I ought to have made further mention at an earlier page of Henry Fawcett. Before he went out to Turkey, he was employed by the Conservative party in some capacity—I forget what, and this appointment was his reward. Whenever he revisited England, he always turned up at Dick's, and often told us some very

interesting things about the country. My readers may remember two naval officers being murdered about that time by Albanian shepherds. Fawcett said that it happened in this way. The two officers were out shooting, and thinking they might be trespassing, they sought to make friends with the two natives. By way of doing so they offered them some ammunition. This was an unfortunate mistake, and cost them their lives. To offer an Albanian gunpowder or cartridges was equivalent, he said, to a challenge, and so the shepherds understood it. Fawcett likewise had a great deal to say of the capital shooting he had in Albania, where he often went out without any fear of being molested, and had rare sport with the woodcocks.

Some twenty years after the club had breathed its last, I invited all its surviving members to dinner at my own house, and we numbered as many as fourteen. By that time we had most of us cast off all traces of Bohemia, and settled down into sober, respectable citizens. Among the missing faces were some of the best-known and most popular members of the club—Brandt, Sotheby, Lomer, Conington, and others; for twenty years is as bad as a charge of grape-shot fired into a group of friends. But we soon found ourselves back, as it were, in the old room at Dick's, and almost seemed to listen again to the silent voices. Let nobody suppose, however, that there was any sadness or melancholy in the meeting. On the contrary, we had a very joyous evening, compared the Toryism of Lord Salisbury with the Toryism of Lord Palmerston, and agreed that Lord Beaconsfield had a touch of both in his composition. The old Irish members had disappeared, or we should have had some glowing denunciation of

Gladstone. But Trevor was there, a cynical epicure, and Charles, whose political allegiance never faltered, and whose humorous smile and shrewd glance were as bright and as keen as ever. And Marten came, and Durell, the warmest of friends and the most implacable of colloquial antagonists. Stokes and Turner were in India, Griffiths was at the Cape.

We dissected the Conservative working man, at that time a much-talked-of personage. George Eliot and Jane Austen, Trollope and Thackeray, Macaulay and Froude had their respective partisans, and we did not separate till an hour worthy of the *Ramblers*. Since that time many more have been taken, and I don't think it would be possible to get up such a dinner now. Still, as Lord Beaconsfield said, reminiscences are a great comfort. In fact, one ought to lay them down in one's youth, to be enjoyed in our old age. But this means keeping a diary : a thing which I could never bring myself to do. I shall not therefore have to endure the oft-repeated sarcasm at the expense of such memories which is conveyed in the words, "fine old crusted."

The Canning Club, of which a branch, I believe, still exists at Oxford, was founded about the year 1870, shortly after the decease of the *Rambler*. This was a strictly Tory club. It was supposed to represent that section of the Tories who heartily approved of the Reform Bill of 1867 and might be considered the more liberal wing of the party. It was hoped that it might form the nucleus of a club which should attract the rising generation of Tories, and was started, as I understood, with the approval of Lord Beaconsfield. Among its

original members were Lord Rowton, or Montagu Corry as he was then, George Russell, Edward Pember, Ormsby, and myself. What was wanted to make it a success in London was an organising chief, which we had not got. Four out of the five I have mentioned were all busy men, and could not spare the time that was necessary; and Russell, who might have had sufficient leisure, was not the man to devote himself to business unless he was obliged.

The Canning was, I think, in some respects a misnomer; for Canning was resolutely opposed to a democratic suffrage, while the members of the club were most of them equally hostile to Continental Liberalism. However, the name served well enough; but the club, in London at all events, did not take on. We had some very pleasant meetings at the old Gray's Inn Coffee House, one of the best of the old London taverns, and now, alas! with the rest of its vinous brethren, a memory only. We dined there two or three times with Russell in the chair, and devised various schemes for reorganising the Tory party after the great defeat of 1868. But they ended in talk. The port wine was undeniable. George Russell and Jack Ormsby were enough by themselves to keep any table alive, and Pember, who might then have been called, in Macaulay's words, "a stern, unbending Tory," used to describe his creed in much the same terms as Glover would have used in similar circumstances: "Keep all you've got." That was Toryism. He modified these opinions considerably as time went on, and I think eventually became a member of the Eighty Club. But if I wrong him I ask his pardon. The London Canning was never formally dissolved. But we were never numerous enough to give it any chance of

permanence. Members ceased to attend, and it gradually dwindled away, though some ten years ago I remember Pember saying that he supposed it was then still in existence.

The Cecil Club had better luck. It was founded about twenty years ago, and it meets every Tuesday night during the session of Parliament. This is an excellent plan ; then the latest ideas of the political situation and the latest views of the Conservative leaders are circulated through a large circle of younger politicians, and by them again passed on through other strata of society. In this way a kind of freemasonry is established among the members of a political party, than which nothing can be more useful in promoting united action. There is a club dinner once a month, and some well-known public man is usually invited to take the chair on these occasions. I have not been a regular attendant at these dinners ; but I have seen Mr. Balfour in the chair, and the Marquis of Bath, and Lord Colchester, and I believe that both the late Lord Goschen and Lord Ashbourne have been kind enough to preside.

I myself have had the honour of occupying the vice-chair more than once. When Lord Colchester was in the chair, I had an opportunity of asking him a question to which I have long wanted to get an answer. In his father's diary it is stated that when Sir Henry Halford—I mean the physician—knew of the duel between the Duke of Wellington and Lord Winchilsea, he quoted the words attributed to Augustus when challenged to single combat by Antony :

*Quærat certamen cui nil nisi vita superstes :
Subdita cui cedit Roma, cavere meum est.*

But his Lordship could not satisfy my curiosity as to where these lines can be found, nor have I as yet found anyone who could.

I once sat next to Mr. Saintsbury at the Cecil. His "Life of Lord Derby" in the "Queen's Prime Ministers" series had not long been published, and as in it there were frequent references to myself, and my own biography of that statesman, we had some very interesting talk. He had called in question a statement of mine to the effect that an indiscreet speech of Lord Derby's before the General Election of 1865 lost him the Roman Catholic vote. I now had an opportunity of pointing out to him that he had mistaken the particular speech to which I referred, and that, as to the effect on the elections, I had my information from Mr. Disraeli himself. Mr. Saintsbury went into the question with great good humour; but I forget how it ended—whether he turned the tables upon me, or whether he did not.

The plan of the Junior Carlton was suggested to Mr. Disraeli by Colonel Taylor in 1863, and at page 302 of the second volume of "Memoirs of an Ex-Minister" we find a letter from Mr. Disraeli to Lord Malmesbury, pointing out to him that a new club was required, to be "a central point for country solicitors, land agents, etc., who are winning and are to win our elections." The Carlton and the Conservative Clubs were so full that many men had a long time to wait for admission to them, and neither of them provided accommodation for exactly the class of men described by Colonel Taylor. The Junior Carlton and St. Stephen's are Tory clubs of quite a different order from those already noticed. The Junior Carlton has, I imagine, quite answered its purpose as described in Mr. Disraeli's letter; but the

Canning and the Cecil and the Rambler were meant to bring young men together, and to strengthen political principles by social ties. For this reason, although the Rambler was practically a Tory club, its doors were open to everybody—and as many converts are made, perhaps, by good fellowship as by either reading or reasoning. I was a member of St. Stephen's myself, and to a journalist it was extremely useful. When I ceased doing regular work I left the club, not wanting two ; but down to that time I went there nearly every afternoon, as it was a good deal frequented by members of both Houses, being just at the corner of the Victoria Embankment by Westminster Bridge. Here I used often to see the late Lord Stanhope, Cecil Raikes, Lord Rowton, Lord Ashbourne, and Lord Randolph Churchill ; and thus I was sometimes enabled to write the night's leader without having to go down to the *Standard* office for the latest intelligence.

Mr. Mudford was then editor of the *Standard*, and I always found members very ready to tell me anything that was worth knowing. From St. Stephen's it was a short step across to the lobby of the House, and thither I often went, not merely for the sake of seeing members or gleaning intelligence, but also in order to watch the little groups collected there, and the stream of human life passing backwards and forwards between the inner and the outer lobby. I used to be particularly interested in what I took to be meetings between members and one or more of their constituents. It was good to note their countenances : on the member's would be sometimes a look of impatience, sometimes of real or assumed delight, sometimes of the courage of despair with which a man faces an irksome duty that

he would fain shirk if he could. The visitor's countenance would display equally varying emotions, and I used to amuse myself by conjecturing on what business they had come. I thought of the many disappointments, the many weary hours of waiting, the many hopes deferred which that vestibule must have witnessed. I have not been there lately, but I am told that I should see rather a change in the personal element if I went there now.

CHAPTER XV.

TORY JOURNALISM AND LITERATURE.

The *Press*—The Seeleys, Father and Son—The *New Quarterly*—A Subsidy from the Porte—Musurus Pasha—The *Pall Mall Gazette* Founded—Mr. Frederick Greenwood—The County Government Bill—The *Pall Mall Staff*—A Wink from an Archdeacon—The *Yorkshire Post*: a Start under Difficulties—Joining the Staff of the *Standard*—Writing Leaders by Snatches—System of Payment—Invited to Join the *Times* Staff—Mr. Mudford—Mr. Curtis—The *Standard* Changes Hands—Contributions to the *Quarterly Review*—Its Editors—Founding of the *National Review*—Articles in the *Fortnightly* and in the *Nineteenth Century*—Sir James Knowles—*Fraser's* and *Blackwood's*—Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice and Junius—Mr. Sidney Low and Mr. Jeyes—Mr. William Blackwood.

MY memory, I am sorry to say, extends a long way backwards, into the journalism of the early 'sixties and a little further. I have already mentioned my connection with the *Press* newspaper, and what I owed to Mr. Coulton, its editor, when I first joined it. But I have a little more to say about its subsequent history after Mr. Coulton's death. The paper was carried on, as before, by the leaders of the party, being edited by Mr. Haydon, a son of the painter. During this period, Mr. Lucas, who had been editor before Coulton, used to send us occasional articles, and every now and then some witty verses. Another member of the original staff was Madden, who had been on the *Morning Chronicle*, I think, when Black was editor. But we depended chiefly on Shirley Brooks for our humorous column, which was sometimes very good, sometimes

mediocre, and often, I am afraid, for lack of material, rather poor. The best of the articles were republished afterwards in a little volume called the "Coalition Guide." During the Indian Mutiny the articles attacking the old East India Company in no measured terms were written, I believe, by Colonel Outram.

The year following Coulton's death the *Press* was sold to Mr. Newdegate, who naturally imparted a strong Protestant flavour to it. It was edited at first by Mr. Seeley, the publisher, a very clever old gentleman who had been a leader-writer on the *Times* in his day. I still continued on the paper writing reviews and miscellaneous articles and acting also for a time as sub-editor. I used to find old Mr. Seeley a very amusing companion in the editor's room, and it was there that I made acquaintance with his distinguished son, John Seeley, who now began to write a good deal for the paper, both literary and political articles. Mr. Newdegate himself often came to the office, and used to chat with me about Leicestershire. He had often been to Wistow with the hounds, he said, and knew the Halford family. I remember, too, that we once had a visit from a man whom I was glad to see, namely Mr. Stapleton, who had been Canning's private secretary, and wrote the "Life of Canning." He did not tell us anything in particular; but it was something, I thought, to have shaken hands with one who had been so near the great statesman whose early death was almost as heavy a blow to the Tory party as Mr. Pitt's.

Mr. Seeley did not continue to edit the paper very long. After him came Mr. Creed, who in turn was followed by Mr. Paterson, whose management was distinguished by some articles on Mr. Lowe's once celebrated

“ Revised Code ” which attracted a good deal of attention at the time and were thought to have destroyed it. Soon after this my own connection with the paper came to an end. It lingered on for some little time, and finally was amalgamated with the *St. James's Chronicle*. It was sad to compare its end with the beginning. It had been intended originally to be only a temporary publication, on the lines of the *Anti-Jacobin*, its object being to write down the Coalition, which had provoked, of course, the bitter hostility of Mr. Disraeli. As long as he continued to preside over its management, it kept up its character, and though many thought it too personal, none ever called it dull. But it is very difficult to keep up a publication of this kind at its original level. The *Anti-Jacobin* would have languished had it lived much longer ; and other periodicals could be named which, starting with exceptional brilliancy, have subsided by degrees to the level of mediocrity.

While the *Press* was still in existence, I had some interesting and amusing experiences of journalism of quite a different character, and though my work was partially in support of a nominally Whig minister, it represented a Tory policy, which has not even yet accomplished its full task. At that time, while the remembrance of the Crimean War was fresh in the national mind, and English sympathies with Turkey were still warm, Mr. Haydon, whom I have already mentioned, had started a periodical with the title of the *New Quarterly*, which was naturally rather resented by Mr. Murray. However, that is nothing to the present purpose. The *New Quarterly* was specially devoted to the interests of Turkey, then in some trouble about the Danubian Principalities, Moldavia, Wallachia, and like-

AUTHOR'S NOTE.

As the reference to the *Morning Post* on this page may give rise to the inference that that paper was either subsidised or controlled by the Turkish Ambassador or his Government, the author has much pleasure in stating, on the authority of Lord Glenesk, that there is not the slightest foundation for such a suggestion.

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wise Servia. Haydon asked me to write articles for him on this subject, and used to come to my chambers in Gray's Inn with a bundle of pencil notes, which it was my business to reduce into the shape of an article. I did not know at the time where they came from ; but when Haydon left the *Press* and was made an Inspector of Factories, he had to leave London, and it became necessary either to abandon the *New Quarterly* or to put somebody else in communication with the Excellent personage from whom he drew his information. He accordingly handed the job over to myself. The publication had a subsidy from the Turkish Government of £200 a year, and we were to divide the plunder.

In due course I was presented to his Excellency the Turkish Ambassador, Musurus Pasha, and it was settled that I should visit him when required, and write such articles as he wished to have published. Of course, he was not satisfied with merely an article once a quarter, and it was arranged with Mr. Borthwick, then the Editor of the *Morning Post*, and now Lord Glenesk, that that paper would take leading articles from me in support of the Turkish policy of Lord Palmerston. I can't exactly say how often I was required to write—sometimes two or three times a week—sometimes, perhaps, not for a month. But as I was paid for each article by the *Post*, in addition to my share of the subsidy, I did pretty well. But without these honoraria I should have been more than half repaid by my interviews with Musurus, and the singularly humorous and vivacious style in which his instructions were communicated. He used to sit cross-legged on his sofa and dictate his views with a volubility which was sometimes perplexing, and mingled with jokes which were always good ones. He was, I

think, most amusing when at a loss for the particular English word he wanted, for he neither spoke English fluently nor pronounced it correctly. He often had to fall back upon his French, and then I was mostly able to help him to the word he wanted. I could hardly keep my countenance when he pronounced "bloodshed" "brodspread." He was always in good humour, and seemed, in talking to me at least, to treat politics rather as a joke. He told me a great deal, however, which I was very glad to know, and which I have found very useful since.

Scarcely was the *Press* in its grave when another paper sprang into existence, which was destined to be a great success. This was the *Pall Mall Gazette*, founded in the year 1865 by the late Mr. George Smith, but mainly indebted for the brilliant career which awaited it to Mr. Frederick Greenwood, who continued to edit it down to the fall of Lord Beaconsfield's Government in 1880. I remember Greenwood coming to my chambers to talk about it. But I had nothing whatever to do with its birth, or management, and was at first only a very occasional contributor, for the *Pall Mall Gazette* did not begin as an avowed Tory paper. On the contrary, if obliged to take a name, it would have called itself Liberal. It did not support Lord Derby's Reform Bill in 1867, nor, as far as I can remember, did it take any decided line about either the Irish Church Bill or the Irish Land Bill. But it showed no mercy to the military and naval administration of the Liberal Government, and on the never-forgotten questions of Sir Spencer Robinson and the Ewelme Rectory the *Pall Mall Gazette* made its teeth meet in the eminent offenders.

The *Pall Mall*, like so many other journals, was best when it was aggressive. It supported the general principles of Lord Beaconsfield's Eastern policy to the last, but found fault with the want of vigour displayed in giving effect to them. It supported the Minister, but not the Cabinet; and to such an extent did it carry its strictures upon the Government in the late 'seventies, that I remember hearing it said in a Tory country house that the *Pall Mall* had gone mad. I had nothing to do with all this. I continued to write reviews and miscellaneous articles for the paper; but Greenwood and myself did not thoroughly agree upon political questions till after the establishment of the *St. James's Gazette*, though even then I did not do much political work for him. He favoured the Fourth Party, and used to repeat their jokes at the expense of Sir Stafford Northcote, and ridicule his gestures and attitudes, in a manner which he himself has probably forgotten by this time.

At a later date I was able to join with Greenwood in attacking a Tory Government, for though as a party man I could digest a good deal, there were one or two cherished principles at the bottom of my heart with which my conscience would suffer no tampering. One was the maintenance of what Lord Beaconsfield used to call our "territorial constitution." I thought, and think still, that the landed proprietors in every English county make the best magistrates, and should of right have in their hands the conduct of all county business. I never liked the Prisons Bill brought in by Lord Beaconsfield's Government. But when Lord Salisbury brought in his County Government Bill my party loyalty collapsed. On this question Greenwood quite agreed

with me, and I wrote a succession of articles in the *St. James's Gazette* showing that the Bill was the wanton sacrifice of an excellent working system on the shrine of an abstract idea, a thing which had generally been thought repugnant to the English temperament. I pointed out that the Municipal Reform Act of 1834 was due to the gross abuses, jobbery, and corruption proved against the old system ; and that not a single charge of any kind was ever brought against the county magistrates at Quarter Sessions, a regimen which combined the three virtues of economy, honesty, and efficiency. Where is the economy now ? Greenwood thoroughly agreed with these views, and I enjoyed writing those articles immensely.

Through the *Pall Mall Gazette* I came to know Fitz-James Stephen, who at one time was a pillar of the journal ; and my old friend, James Hannay, was enticed from Edinburgh to London by the promise of £600 a year on the new journal. He had better, I think, have stayed where he was. But with Stephen, who, I have been told, made more by the *Pall Mall Gazette* than he ever made at the Bar ; with Hannay, whose witty articles relieved the more serious columns ; with Traill, who joined a little later ; and with Jefferies, who wrote "The Gamekeeper at Home," Greenwood was well set up ; and with his excellent judgment—for he was a born editor—success was a certainty. The well-known articles by the "Casual" gave the paper a fillip in its early days, no doubt ; but it would have made its way without Mr. James Greenwood's experiences, I feel sure.

While the *Pall Mall* remained in Mr. Smith's hands we used to have a grand dinner every year at Green-

wich, on the same scale as the *Saturday Review* dinner, at which I was sometimes present ; but afterwards, when the paper fell under other management, and became a Liberal organ, Mr. Greenwood, with all his old staff, retired and started the *St. James's Gazette*, and then we used to have annual dinners of a different description, to which the printing staff were invited, and at which contributors were expected to make speeches.

Greenwood did not always get on well with his contributors. He fell out with James Hannay, though perhaps that was rather Hannay's fault than his own ; and also with Traill, who for a long time had been his right-hand man, and although in this particular case I think Greenwood was in the right, another man perhaps might have softened things down a little, and avoided a complete rupture. I never knew exactly why he gave up the *St. James's Gazette*, but I believe that it was owing to some misunderstanding with one of its principal supporters.

I myself always got on very well with him. I recognised his great ability as an editor, and never objected to his amendments, or resented his refusal of an article. In discussing a subject with him beforehand, you were sure of being met with sound judgment and a nice appreciation of those shades of difference which make an article acceptable or the reverse to any particular journal. When he started the *Anti-Jacobin* I continued to write for him ; but after the stoppage of that well-intentioned Tory effort, I almost lost sight of him. With him and his two daughters, while they lived in London, we were on visiting terms. They used to dine with us and we with them. In those days he was a very good talker, and was much better read in

English literature than many people gave him credit for. Besides this, he had seen and known so many famous and interesting persons, that his conversation never lacked colour. I remember very well dining at his house in Kensington nearly twenty years ago, when we remained in the dining-room after the Miss Greenwoods had retired. The other guests, who were all men, gradually dropped off one by one, till Greenwood, Sutherland Edwards, and myself were the only three left. We smoked and drank whisky-and-soda in moderation ; but the conversation was so absorbing that we sat on and on without giving a thought to the time, till on going out at the hall door, Edwards and myself found it was broad daylight and five o'clock in the morning.

It was in the 'sixties, somewhere about the time that the *Pall Mall* was launched, that Archdeacon Denison brought out a weekly paper styled the *Church and State Review*, to which I was invited to contribute. He has given an account of it in his "Notes of My Life." I was glad to serve under him. It was a pleasure to be in his company. He was a very handsome man, tall, and with a stately presence, but with a humorous twinkle in his eye withal, which robbed his remarks on political or ecclesiastical opponents of all their bitterness. He was always dignified, but never stiff, and though my readers may think it a vainglorious boast, I can assure them it is strictly true that he once winked at me. As Short, in "The Old Curiosity Shop," said when little Nell called him "Father," "I thought I should ha' bust."

To be winked at by an Archdeacon, and such an Archdeacon too, more than repaid my Tory devotion to

the Church. Don't tell me that a nod is as good as a wink. I may have thought so once ; but I have known better ever since that memorable day when I parted from the Archdeacon in Palace Yard.

In the year 1866 it was determined to start a Conservative daily at Leeds. I think the projector applied to Hamber, who was then editor of the *Standard*, to recommend someone to undertake the management of the new paper. He mentioned it to me, and, without engaging to take the editorship, I said I would go down to Leeds and see how matters stood. I found the committee which had been appointed for the purpose to consist of very pleasant, hospitable gentlemen, and I agreed to stay and help in the preliminary labours, neither few nor easy, incidental to the issue of a new daily paper. I found the shrewd Yorkshiremen with whom I had to deal thoroughly liberal in money matters, most courteous and friendly in private, but quite disposed to get full value for their outlay, and not always, for want of experience, quite able to appreciate the difficulties with which I had to contend.

My principal work was the formation of an editorial staff, and as the materials for it did not exist, or only to a limited extent, upon the spot, they had to be looked for in London. I could not be in two places at once, and nobody knows better than the editor of a daily paper how necessary it is to make arrangements with writers or others who are to be permanent members of the staff, by personal interviews and not by letter. During my flying visit to London I did the best I could. I secured them a capital sporting correspondent in Mr. Ashley, the "Asmodeus" of the *Standard*. I got them, instead of myself, a resident editor, who had considerable experi-

ence in provincial journalism, who was well read in Parliamentary history, an Oxford man, and a scholar who could write in a popular as well as a forcible style. I engaged two leader writers for them in London : one who already was, and one who was soon to be among the foremost journalists in London ; and I still had to find some competent man to fill the place of London correspondent, to which great importance was attached by the Leeds Committee. I tried in various quarters. But there was always a screw loose. Sometimes the would-be correspondent stood out for outrageously high terms ; sometimes I had my doubts whether he was in a position to secure the kind of information which a London correspondent is expected to supply. The time was growing short, and at last I had to do it myself. The final arrangement, then, when I returned to town to take charge of the London department, was that I should supply two London letters and two leaders a week ; that James Hannay should supply one leader and H. D. Traill another. Two were to be written in the office at Leeds. I forgot to mention that I also found a name for the paper, and christened it the *Yorkshire Post*.

When I left Leeds a fortnight before the first number appeared everything seemed to be settled. My old Oxford friend, who had taken the editorship, did not doubt that he could carry out the part assigned to himself. Hannay and Traill I equally believed that I could trust. The only weak point in the arrangement seemed to me to be the London letter, which I had been obliged to take upon myself. It was work which I disliked very much, and for which my tastes and habits did not at all qualify me. The London correspondent

must be a man who is both able and willing to spend his days and nights in the collection of social gossip, political rumours, literary intelligence, and anecdotes appertaining to all three. He must waylay Members in the Lobby and buttonhole likely informants at his club, or wherever else he can find them ; have the *entrée* to fashionable drawing-rooms, and be intimate with actors and actresses. If he does not possess opportunities for acquiring the valuable information which is so grateful to provincial palates, he must at least be believed to possess them, and with the aid of a powerful imagination, he may without much difficulty persuade people that he really does. He may invent a few scandalous stories simply for the purpose of contradicting them, thereby showing to what superior sources of information he has access. He may announce that marriages which have never been dreamed of are not to come off, and that Cabinet changes, the reports of which he has invented, have been postponed. All this he may do, and nobody will take the trouble to contradict him, or if they do it will only advertise him all the more, and cause his paper to be more eagerly sought after. For, be it noted that the thousands of readers who delight in this species of composition care very little whether it is true or false. They probably, as a rule, think it neither the one nor the other ; but it amuses them for the moment. Some of it must be real, they think ; and to be brought for a few minutes into contact with circles about which the British middle class is insatiably curious is an enjoyment which they are quite willing to pay for.

I knew that I could not provide it for them. I was not up to Mr. Chuckster in "The Old Curiosity Shop."

But some kind of letters had to be written and my two leaders besides, in addition to the literary work which I had in hand. Judge, then, what was my horror when, two days before the paper was to come out, I had one letter from Hannay to say that he couldn't write, and another from the editor at Leeds to say that they could do nothing at their end, and that the other two leaders must be furnished from London. I had no time to look out for other contributors. Traill came to the rescue like a man, and by superhuman exertions we pulled the waggon out of the rut. But it was idle to expect that a paper brought out under these difficulties should be all that a first number ought to be. I did not blame the committee for complaining of it, but only for putting the saddle on the wrong horse. It was supposed to be all my fault, and I soon saw it was useless to repeat the facts to men who had got only one idea into their heads, who knew nothing whatever about journalism, and could not, perhaps, have fully understood my case even had they been willing to listen to it. However, we did not part company over that job, and I continued on good terms with them for some years. I soon got rid of the London letter, and continued to send them two leaders a week for nearly ten years longer. The *Yorkshire Post* became a great Tory paper, and in spite of the little fiasco which occurred on its opening day I still regard it with a paternal feeling and am proud of the share which I took in building up its fortunes.

Among the pleasant acquaintances which I then made were Mr. George Lascelles, a brother of Lord Harewood; Mr. Charles Tennant, of Scarcroft; and Lord Nevill, the present Lord Abergavenny, who then had a residence near Leeds. They were all active members of

the committee; and I spent a very pleasant day or two with each of them. George Lascelles had married Lady Louisa Murray, a daughter of Lord Mansfield; and I found also in her ladyship the old Jacobite traditions in full force. She often spoke of the Duke of Cumberland as "the Butcher," and no doubt if all was true that was reported of him, he deserved the name. Mr. Lascelles lived in the dower house near Harewood, and besides entertaining me there he took me with him on a fishing expedition up to Malham Tarn, a small lake among the hills, well-stocked with trout, which I thought the most delicious I had ever tasted.

After the change of Ministry in 1868 the *Globe* became for a time the leading evening organ of the Tory party. Mr. Marwood Tucker was the Editor, and Mr. Montagu Corry was the *interpretes* who brought us the news from Olympus. I wrote for the *Globe* for a short time, but I cannot recollect much about it. I don't know whether I ought to style my recollections of the Parliamentary work which I did for the *Graphic* a Tory memory or not. I think perhaps I may, as I fear I acted on Dr. Johnson's principle and took care that "the Whig dogs should not have the best of it." But my work was purely descriptive—a description of the debates as lively as I could make it, but not analysing the arguments of the different speeches. I used to like that work very much. I sat in the Reporters' Gallery, and heard many interesting "sets-to" between the leaders. However, it was just about this time that I was placed on the staff of the *Standard*, which left me little time for other newspaper work.

About this time, too, a dinner was given to a number of Tory journalists at the expense, I suppose, of the

Carlton, at the Star and Garter at Richmond. Montagu Corry was there, and Lord Skelmersdale, and Mr. Bell, and we had a very jovial party. Montagu Corry, I remember, was taken ill in the middle of dinner, being seized with a fit of some kind, and fell off his chair, to the great alarm and anxiety of the whole company. But it turned out, fortunately, to be nothing serious. But I must carry my readers forward now into other departments of Tory literature, after some brief memories of the *Standard*, which I joined permanently in the summer of 1872.

When I joined the *Standard* the principal leader writer was Percy Greg, an able man, who usually wrote three or four articles a week. He had occupied this position for some years, and I remember Mark Pattison saying that whenever he took up the *Standard* he was sure of finding at least one very good, well-reasoned leader; and I will venture to say that nine times out of ten that was Percy Greg's. At this time Mr. Johnstone was Editor, in succession to Captain Hamber, who had retired. Three or four of us would go down every afternoon and wait in a little ante-room till we were summoned one by one to the Editor's presence, when our task for the day, if any, was arranged. At this time Mr. Johnstone's father, the proprietor of the paper, was alive, and he used to entertain the staff royally, either at his house on the river, which had formerly been, and now is again, Ranelagh, or at another place famous for its glass houses, which he had in Kent. After a year some misunderstanding arose between the father and son, which led again to a change of editors, Mr. Mudford being selected for the post. Under his management the paper rose rapidly in public estimation, and he was

ably seconded by Mr. G. B. Curtis, the assistant-editor. Mr. T. H. Escott, Mr. Richardson Evans, and Mr. Alfred Austin were now the chief leader writers. Mr. Watts, a very forcible writer on foreign affairs, not being able, as I understood, to agree with Mr. Mudford, retired with some other members of the staff, who were equally unable to accommodate themselves to the new *régime*.

Foreign affairs now fell into the hands of the present poet laureate, who continued for many years to represent the *Standard* upon all questions of interest connected with Continental matters. He was in frequent communication with Lord Salisbury ; and it was generally allowed that on all subjects of this nature the *Standard* occupied a foremost place among the leading London journals. Austin used latterly to send up his articles from his place in Kent, and they generally arrived in Shoe Lane between ten and eleven o'clock. At other times he wrote at the office, and Curtis used to say of him : " Austin's the man for my money : give him three ideas, shut him up in a room, and in one hour you have your three paragraphs." Mr. Mudford seldom came down at night, and he and Curtis used to communicate by telephone. Escott, when Parliament was sitting, used to come with the latest news from the House of Commons, bustling in in full evening dress, ready to expose the latest Liberal dodge or to extol with equal ability the latest Conservative *riposte*. He was a very clever writer, and very adroit in suggesting what it might not be expedient to say openly ; but he burned the candle at both ends, and brought on an illness which prevented him from ever resuming that regular newspaper work which puts so severe a strain on both mind and body.

I did not take up regular night work at the *Standard* till the year 1884, and kept it going for fourteen years. But before that I had to go down to the Reporters' Gallery to write on the debate, which often kept us up till two or three o'clock in the morning. It was the hardest work and the most unsatisfactory that I ever did. We used to write in one of the committee rooms where the reporters sat to transcribe their shorthand notes, and a messenger was in waiting from each newspaper to carry back their copy to the office. The leader writer—I speak only for the *Standard*—had to sit in the Gallery straining his neck to catch what was going on down below, and when he thought he had got enough material for a paragraph, he had to rush off to the committee room and write as fast as the pen could travel over the paper, hand his copy to the messenger, and then tear back to the Gallery to pester all whom he knew for some scraps of information as to what had occurred during his absence. This process had to be repeated several times before the article was finished, and what it would have looked like next morning had there been no one in Shoe Lane to fine-draw the edges and reconcile the contradictions, it is painful to consider.

This system, however, did not continue long after Mr. Mudford's appointment. Henceforth articles on the debate of the night were written in the office. How well I remember my despair and horror when a whole sheaf of "flimsy" would be flung down on the table before me, perhaps as late as half-past eleven or twelve, the article having to be finished by half-past two. To plod through that mass of matter, get anything like a clear idea of its contents, and then write a column of comment all in a little more than a couple of hours was a

job which even now I can scarcely understand how I accomplished.

It was a pleasant drive home on a summer night down the Embankment, or rather I should say morning, for the day was often dawning before I reached my own door ; but as I leaned back in my hansom I had not even the compensation which is yielded by the consciousness of work well done, however difficult or laborious. I used to torture myself all the way by reflecting how much more forcibly this or that argument could have been put, how much more vividly such and such a point could have been brought out, how much more neatly some particular sentence might have been constructed. These bitter reflections were too often justified by a sight of the paper next day ; and though my night leaders were rarely blamed and often praised by the editor, and though the general public perhaps never noticed the kind of flaws which so distressed myself, I could not shut my own eyes to their existence, or derive the slightest pleasure from reading over an article in which they occurred. When I went down at night I had, of course, to take my chance as to what the subject for the leader might be. At other times the subjects usually allotted to myself were Church questions, and questions of constitutional or party history. When the Ritualistic controversy was at its height, in the days of Tooth, Dale, and others, I wrote all the *Standard* leaders on these cases, and they had the good fortune to attract the approval of Dean Lake of Durham. But then I had the invaluable assistance of the present Sir Arthur Charles, who at that time was almost always engaged as counsel for the defence. He kept me straight on all points of law ; and as I had in early life taken

a great deal of interest in these questions, I wrote, I may say, with knowledge.

In my articles on Welsh Disestablishment I was much assisted by Canon Bevan, of St. David's, and on some later Ritualistic questions I had the honour of being instructed by Bishop Creighton, who said that, let the bishops do what they would, he despaired of coming to terms with the extreme men. "We offer to meet them more than half way," he said, "but they won't be met." I was charmed with Bishop Creighton. He reminded me a little by his manner of Archdeacon Denison. He was a tall man, too; but he fell away down below. I think he had the thinnest legs of any man I ever saw, except the fourteenth Earl of Derby.

My connection with the *Standard* terminated early in 1906, having lasted nearly thirty-four years. It is one of my most agreeable memories. I liked the work. I liked the company, of whom more presently. And I liked the pay, though latterly, when I gave up the night work, in 1898, it of course diminished. The annual dinner, which was supposed to be one given by the printing and publishing staff to the editorial staff, was always a great success. The last two or three that I attended took place at the Crystal Palace. All the leading contributors were expected to speak, and some of the others also. I know I said something once in one of my speeches about the badness of my handwriting, which I couldn't always read myself. One of the compositors said plaintively, "Mr. Kebbel says he can't always make out his own handwriting. No more can't we." This remark, which I was foolish enough to repeat, is frequently quoted against me by those who ought to know better.

One advantage of the *Standard* system was that you were paid for your articles as soon as they were sent in. Leaders would naturally be used at once ; but reviews and biographies were often, especially the last, kept over for a long time, and on most other papers—I almost think on all—you had to wait till they were published before you saw your money. The Tory *Standard* was a bright exception to this rule, which, however convenient to proprietors, might under certain circumstances work the greatest injustice to contributors. I remember once pointing this out to Mr. Buckle, who at once acknowledged the truth of what I said. He had asked me to write the biography of Mr. Gladstone for the *Times* ready for the day when that great man should be taken from us, and every now and then he returned me the MS. to be brought up to date. At length I said to him : “ You see, this has been going on a long while. Mr. Gladstone keeps in perfectly good health. Suppose he outlives me, which is quite possible : I shall have written this biography for nothing.” As I say, he saw the situation at once, and sent me a very handsome cheque the next day.

I did a good deal of literary work for the *Times* under both Delane and Chenery, but these contributions would hardly come under the head of Tory memories. Chenery proposed to me to join the *Times*, but required as a condition of discussing the subject that I should leave the *Standard* first. This I declined to do, for I might not have come to terms with Chenery, and then I should have been left out in the cold. Besides, the *Standard* had always treated me very well, and in some respects indulgently, and I did not like the thought of turning my back upon them,

or of ceasing to write openly for the Tory party, to whom I was bound to believe I was doing some service. Again, I think the work on the *Times* would have been harder, and as I wasn't getting younger, I thought I might perhaps break down.

Other men connected with the *Times* whom I knew well were William Stebbing and Samuel Lucas, who each in turn acted as literary editor of the paper. Lucas I have already mentioned as a former editor of the *Press*. He was, of course, a Tory, a most genial and gentlemanly man, and when the Conservatives came in in 1858 he expected something very good from them. He had been instrumental in arranging the coalition between the Radicals and the Tories against the Conspiracy to Murder Bill, when an amendment moved by Mr. Milner Gibson was carried against the Government by a majority of nineteen. Lucas, however, was disappointed. He had run down the game, but he did not get even the jackal's share. He was offered something—a distributorship of stamps, I believe, an office now extinct, but worth at that time £600 to £800 a year. Lucas, however, would have had to leave London if he had taken it, and this he declined to do.

Of Johnstone, for some time Editor of the *Standard*, I have nothing more to say except that he was a cheerful and courteous person, whom it was easy to get on with. He was an Oxford man, and at one time a Fellow of St. John's. But he was not, I should say, specially well qualified for the post which his father conferred upon him. Mudford, on the contrary, was admirably fitted for such work. Nobody is perfect, either personally or officially, and Mudford sometimes both gave offence and took offence when none was intended. This caused at times

some friction with his contributors ; but I don't know that it ever did any real harm. It would have been all the better if Mudford could have overcome his dislike of Society. But he would go nowhere, and he told Lady Jeune, who pressed him repeatedly to visit her, and actually sought to dig him out of his house in Addison Road, that he did not want to have said to him, what Lady Holland said to Macaulay, "I thought you were thin, and you are fat ; I thought you were witty, and you are dull," etc. But the editorial chair was his throne. There he was in his element—a great editor—the greatest, perhaps, with one exception of the Victorian age.

I never got to be on terms of very close intimacy with Mr. Mudford. I did not very often even see him. But in his communications with me he always expressed himself in the most friendly terms, which I am sure were perfectly sincere. When he gave up the editorship, he wrote me a letter, which I have carefully preserved—so carefully, indeed, that I cannot find it—signifying in the handsomest terms his sense of my services and his regret at the severance of our intercourse. He was a kind-hearted—nay, a warm-hearted man—in reality, though his manner was often cold and a trifle constrained, arising, I often thought, from nervousness rather than from any want of real sympathy.

Mr. Curtis I saw almost every day. He was a very cheerful and genial official. On Mr. Mudford's retirement he succeeded to the editorship, which he held till November, 1905, when the *Standard* passed into the hands of Mr. Pearson, and Curtis retired from the stage. The change came upon all of us very suddenly. The first I knew of it was from an announcement in the

Standard to the effect that on that day the transfer would take effect. When I went down to Shoe Lane in the afternoon I found that Curtis had only been told of the transaction the day before. We were naturally all very much astonished. Mr. Curtis went away at once, Mr. Sidney Low and Mr. Jeyes remained. But the literary and biographical department, which branches had been latterly my chief sphere of usefulness, were reduced to such small dimensions that I was not at all surprised to find that my services were no longer in requisition. Night work I could no longer do, and almost all the leaders were thenceforth written at night.

I never knew what induced Mr. Johnstone to part with the paper, which was a very valuable property, and had shown no signs of a declining circulation. I cannot say, as I should like to do, that the transaction was carried out with much consideration for members of the staff, for whom little thought seems to have been shown by those who had so long profited by their services. I am sorry to say this of a Tory newspaper, especially as it is the last word I have to say about Tory journalism proper. I must now turn my attention to the Tory periodicals, or periodicals in which I wrote as a Tory.

My first article in the *Quarterly Review* had for its subject an excellent specimen of an intellectual Tory, one whose creed drew nourishment from mental science as well as from practical interests and historical experiences: I mean De Quincey. I rather think that Elwin was the editor who accepted this article, though Macpherson had succeeded him before it was published. This was in 1862. If I had to write the article again, I don't know that I should say all that I said then. I was greatly in love with metaphysics at that time, and

full of Oxford logic, and I remember that when I first joined the *Press*, and Coulton, my editor, wrote an article highly in praise of Paley, I had the audacity to remonstrate with him, and did, indeed, touch him so nearly that he actually wrote eight closely-written sides of notepaper in reply. I was under the influence of the same set of ideas when I wrote the article on De Quincey, and made great play, I remember, with the *γνωριμώτερον ἡμῶν* and the *φύσει γνωριμώτερον*, a right understanding of which I professed to think essential to any true conception of Toryism. That there was much youthful pedantry in all this I shall willingly allow, but after all, it was but a crude attempt to find a basis for Toryism in political philosophy. I was groping in the dark, perhaps, after something in itself desirable, and, at all events, I had the satisfaction of seeing my article fill the place of honour in that number of the *Quarterly*.

I wrote a few more articles while Mr. Macpherson continued editor—one on Lord Liverpool among them. But with the accession of Dr. Smith to that high office, I think I may say that I became a regular contributor. I had been led by "Coningsby" and "Sybil" to study the history of the Tory party in the eighteenth century, and I wrote for Dr. Smith a series of articles on the statesmen of that era, from the accession of Queen Anne to the death of George III. I had begun with Bolingbroke in *Fraser's Magazine*, when Froude was editor; and I continued the series in the *Quarterly* with Lord Godolphin, Lord Peterborough, Sir Robert Walpole, Lord Carteret, and the Duke of Grafton. With the exception of Sir Robert Walpole, these were all Tories—that is, they all in different ways and at different times endeavoured to break down that party system

which the Whigs had established, and to secure greater liberty to the Crown. I continued the subject in other periodicals as well. But I also contributed to the *Quarterly* two or three articles on the politics of the day—one on “The Difficulties of Good Government” in 1888, and another on “Coalition” in 1893. Both of them were suggested by the same phenomena—the desperation, namely, with which daring statesmen will play the game of party, when they see no prospect of accession to power by any ordinary means. There is a scene in “The Heart of Midlothian” which exactly illustrates my meaning: “Whistler, do the cords hurt you?” says Jeanie to the youthful prisoner, who was known only by that name. “Very much.” “But if I were to slacken them, you would harm me?” “No, I would not—you never harmed me or mine.” “There may be good in him yet,” thought Jeanie; “I will try fair play with him.” She cut his bonds, he stood upright, looked round with a laugh of wild exultation, clapped his hands together, and sprang from the ground, as if in transport on finding himself at liberty. He looked so wild that Jeanie trembled at what she had done. “Let me out,” said the young savage. “I wanna unless you promise.” “I’ll make you glad to let us both out,” and so saying, he seized the lighted candle and threw it among the flax, which was instantly in a flame. For “let us out” substitute “let us in” and you have the political situation.

Burke says much the same about political gamblers. Of coalitions all are not bad. It depends on the motives and on the principles of the coalescing parties. The coalition of Lord Nottingham and the Whigs in Queen Anne’s reign to secure the censure of the Peace, the

coalition of Whigs and Tories, diametrically opposed to each other on the two leading questions of the day, the American War and the Royal Prerogative, in order to crush Lord Shelburne, are examples of such transactions in their worst form. Other combinations of the same kind may usually be accepted as consistent with the recognised code of Party warfare, and sometimes, indeed, are unavoidable.

In the article on Walpole, I remember I had called in question some assertion of Mr. John Morley's relative, I think, to the *Craftsman*, which that gentleman rather resented, and in return drew a fancy picture of this and other articles which, I have every reason to suppose, was intended as a representation of my own. It was natural enough, but it was not correct. I continued my articles on Eighteenth Century Toryism in the *Fortnightly Review* and in the *National*. In the former appeared "The Tory Party under Wyndham and Bolingbroke"; in the other were introduced notices of Shelburne, North, and Pitt; and at the suggestion of Mr. Courthope, who then edited the *National Review* conjointly with Mr. Alfred Austin, I prolonged the series down to the death of Mr. Disraeli in 1881.

When it became necessary to appoint a new editor to the *Quarterly Review* in succession to Dr. Smith, I heard that my own name had been put forward as a fit and proper person to fill the vacant chair. When these "Memories" were projected, I asked Mr. Murray what foundation there was for this report. He replied that there was none at all, that Mr. Rowland Prothero had been fixed upon as the new editor long before, and no other man had ever come into competition with him. It is very curious how such rumours get afloat. Not a

syllable had ever been said to myself on the subject, nor had I ever given a thought to it.

When Mr. Prothero was installed, a dinner was given in his honour, to which I was invited, and I remember that in returning thanks for his health, he discussed at some length the advantages and disadvantages of the anonymous system, declaring himself strongly in favour of it. But some time afterwards, when his brother, George Prothero, became editor, he began to make exceptions to the rule, and in the last article which I wrote for the *Quarterly*, on the Creevy Papers, I was invited to put my name to it, which I did. There was no compulsion; but in that number (January, 1904) six articles out of the twelve were signed. Two other articles which I wrote at that time with a strong Tory bias were on the Waverley novels and "Studies of the 'Forty-five," and with this last I interwove some of the Jacobite stories for which I was indebted to Lady Jeune.

When the *National Review* was established in 1883 its birth was celebrated by a dinner at which Mr. Alfred Austin, Mr. Courthope, Lord Salisbury, Mr. Balfour, Mr. Raikes, and, I think, Mr. Mallock, were present. It was then that I first made the acquaintance of Mr. Balfour. I sat next him at dinner, and I remember the conversation turned a good deal on old Oxford and Cambridge stories, of which I was not surprised to find that he had a newer assortment than I had. At that time he had recently distinguished himself by a very spirited speech on the Kilmainham Compact, and was recognised as a rapidly rising politician. In the following year he was instrumental in arranging with Lord Hartington the compromise on the Reform Bill which was carried out in 1885. To the first volume of the

National Review he contributed two very interesting articles on Bishop Berkeley. Lord Lytton, Lord Carnarvon, Cecil Raikes, Earl Percy, and Clare Sewell Read were among the earliest contributors. And I know the extent to which the new review was patronised by the leaders of the Tory party occasioned some little soreness in quarters where similar recognition and assistance had not been experienced, though the services rendered were at least equally meritorious.

It was at Mr. Courthope's suggestion, as already stated, that I wrote in the *National Review* the articles on "Tory Prime Ministers," afterwards republished with the misleading introductory title, "A History of Toryism," which, of course, they were not. Lord Carnarvon thought the two articles on Sir Robert Peel the best of them. My own favourite among them has always been the article on Pitt which appeared in an early number of the *National Review*, and another which was published much later in 1892, being a review of Lord Rosebery's "Life of Pitt." In whatever I have written about Mr. Pitt I have always tried to bring into prominence his moral greatness. In this he stands alone among English Ministers, whether Whig or Tory. Lord Rosebery made some mistake, I think, about the composition of the French and English armies during the Revolutionary war, which as a Tory I felt bound to notice. But what I said about Pitt I am vain enough to think may bear repeating here. My own father was turned thirty years of age at the death of Mr. Pitt, and he could well remember the general grief, verging on despair, which it created.

Thus lived and died William Pitt, the greatest Parliamentary statesman whom England has produced, if greatness is to be measured not merely by the genius of the individual, but by the quality of the

circumstances in which his lot is cast, and the magnitude of the difficulties which he is called upon to confront and overcome. Chatham is a splendid figure in our annals ; but he never was, for he never had the chance of being, the one man upon whom, through long years of danger from both foreign and domestic enemies, a nation reposed with confidence ; whose removal from power was the signal for general despair ; whose restoration revived the public spirit as sunrise renews the daylight ; and whose death was lamented by the tears not only of personal friends and political supporters, but of thousands who had never seen him, yet felt themselves reduced to sudden helplessness by the loss of their tried protector.

This, after all, is only a feeble prose paraphrase of Scott's beautiful lines, which express exactly the same thing :

Now is the stately column broke,
The beacon light is quenched in smoke,
The trumpet's silver sound is still,
The warder silent on the hill.

I never thought that either Lord Stanhope in his " Life of Pitt," or Mr. Disraeli in his interesting diagnosis of that illustrious statesman, much less Lord Macaulay in the " Encyclopædia Britannica," did full justice to this aspect of Pitt's career.

When the *Fortnightly Review* was edited by Mr. Morley, I wrote some articles for him, and he was pleased to say that he admired my writing when I had " a sufficiently large canvas." I confess I like plenty of room. As Johnson said of himself that he liked to fold his arms and have his talk out, so in writing I like to have it out with myself, and to follow up an argument to its logical conclusion.

When Mr. Escott succeeded Mr. Morley in 1882, he proposed to give a dinner to the leaders of the Tory party, though hitherto the *Fortnightly* had not been avowedly a party publication. I remember meeting

in the street Chapman, the publisher, who asked me if I did not think it a very good idea. Of course, I said yes, and I suppose he found the money, as Escott did give the dinner, and entertained Lord Salisbury, Sir Stafford Northcote, and some of their principal colleagues at a sumptuous banquet, which I hope had the desired effect.

Neither to the *National* nor to the *Fortnightly* were my contributions mainly political. I wrote on sporting and literary subjects as well, about shooting and natural history, about Oxford, about Chawton and Jane Austen, about Gilbert White and Selborne; but when I began to write for Sir James Knowles in the *Nineteenth*, I was practically almost restricted to politics. Mr. Knowles, as he was then, invited myself and one or two others, Oxford friends, to contribute; and I remember one of them, a man of great humour, who, not being a public writer himself, was much pleased with the implied distinction, considering what a future generation would say of us when they saw our names in the *Nineteenth*, and exclaiming with great glee: "‘Ah!’ they’ll say; ‘they must have been men of mark: they must have been men of mark.’" Knowles, I think, regarded myself as a reasonably competent exponent of modern Toryism, and with sufficient knowledge of our Parliamentary history to be able to write on party politics when anything like a crisis or a novel situation occurred. For a long time almost all my articles bore on some phase of the party system. At times, of course, I took a wider range. An article, for instance, on "European Coalitions against England" appeared in May, 1896, and in a much earlier number of the *Nineteenth* I reviewed, at Mr. Knowles's request, the political novels

of Lord Beaconsfield. Ten years ago I wrote an article entitled "The Good Sense of the English People," and I mention it now because recent events have gone so far to justify it. I pointed out that this same good sense which had often intervened at critical periods with the best effect was liable to be confused by cross issues and subordinate controversies, which are now much more numerous than they used to be. "There is no saying what effect may be produced by the formation of a Parliamentary Labour Party appealing to the support of the artisans on general grounds without compelling their acceptance of any rigid code of articles. We know that the leaders of a party which has been returned upon general principles may afterwards use their power for the promotion of particular objects not originally contemplated by their followers, who, even if willing, are not always able to offer any effectual resistance." (March, 1895.)

Such was my own prophecy just eleven years before it was fulfilled.

Sir James Knowles was an indefatigable editor, and the result of his exertions was seen in the great popularity which the *Nineteenth Century* immediately commanded. The last article which I wrote for him was on Conservative organisation and the agricultural labourer. I wished to point out that there was yet time for the aristocracy to say to the peasantry, "We will be your leaders." I shall have more to say about this in another chapter. The article was a good deal noticed, and an enthusiastic gentleman in Lincolnshire wrote to me to say that it ought to be reprinted as a pamphlet, and sent to every landowner in the kingdom. As he himself is a large proprietor who has given much attention

to the subject, his appreciation was worth something, but what he added was worth more as showing the difficulty of arousing the English country gentlemen to a sense of their situation, and of the dangers by which they are encompassed. He said he had made several attempts himself to induce the gentry to form some kind of combination for the purpose of supplying the peasantry with land, in order to prevent its being taken by force. But it was the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Nobody would take the trouble to go into the question : things would last *their* time, and so forth. So it is, so it has been, and so, I suppose, it always will be. It is too soon as yet, I hope, to say to the territorial class, "Your house is left unto you desolate." But if their eyes are not speedily opened to the signs of the times it will not be too soon much longer.

I forgot to mention that in the *Fortnightly Review* I wrote an article styled, "The County System," calling attention to the many merits of that system. But, unhappily, it did not prevent Lord Salisbury from introducing his County Government Bill.

I knew something of Mrs. Riddell, the authoress of "George Geith." In the year 1866 she started a Tory magazine, and inaugurated it, as was then the universal custom, by a dinner to contributors. I dined at her house in company with James Hannay and many others who scented plunder ; but I am afraid there was more disappointment than satisfaction in the end. The title of the new periodical was the *St. James's Magazine*, and we all wished it success, for Mrs. Riddell was a very agreeable and handsome woman ; but there were too many monthlies of the old-fashioned stamp to allow room for another unless seasoned by some striking novelty.

Several efforts were made to resuscitate *Fraser*. Mr. Froude took it in hand, and I had a talk with him one day when George Lawrence (Guy Livingstone) came in, whom I had never seen since the old Union days at Oxford, when he "fleshed his maiden sword," as he expressed it, on some luckless Radical undergraduate who had offended him. Froude, as I have said, fell in with my ideas about Bolingbroke and the Tories ; but he did not stay long on that magazine. Principal Tulloch, who succeeded him, was very hopeful. He spoke in one of his letters of having secured some very valuable contributors and very interesting articles. But it was no use. The old *Fraser*, the *Fraser* of Parker, the *Fraser* of Whyte-Melville, of Digby Grand, Kate Coventry, and "The Interpreter" ; the *Fraser* of "Friends in Council" and "John Halifax," was dead. It had once stood on nearly if not quite as high a level as *Blackwood*, and in the monthly notices of periodical literature which appeared in the newspapers of fifty years ago, they were always named together—*Blackwood* first and *Fraser* second, both on a higher platform than any of the other magazines. *Blackwood* has retained its place and retained its specialities. In a circular issued last December it is stated that "for ninety years *Blackwood* has been the same outspoken, hypocrisy-hating, pretence-exposing organ, and its individuality is as marked as ever ;" and this is quite true. It has an idiosyncrasy such as no other magazine can lay claim to. My own memory of *Blackwood* as a contributor goes back about five-and-twenty years, and during the whole of that period I have been, I may say, a fairly frequent contributor to the great Tory magazine.

In the *Monthly Review*, established by Mr. Murray in 1901, I wrote last year (1906) an article on "County Magistrates," in which I pointed out some of the inconveniences that might arise from the abolition of the old qualifications. I only mention this because I see that the present Lord Chancellor has already had reason to complain of the abuses which I then predicted.

My personal acquaintance with men of letters and editors has not been very extensive. My old friend Coulton, who introduced me to political journalism, I have already mentioned. Dr. Smith, the editor of the *Quarterly*, I knew very well, too. He used to say that he liked to have articles from me in the summer, for then he knew he would have one article he could rely upon for the October number which would give him no trouble and not interrupt his holiday. This was a high compliment, much the same as Townshend, the editor of the *Spectator*, paid to Lomer, the Rambler. "Mr. Lomer's leaders," he said to a mutual friend, "are the only ones I never read before they go to press." Dr. Smith was a capital editor to get on with: under him one never had any trouble about proofs and revises, and second and third revises. He was a hospitable man, too, and I remember some pleasant parties at his house. I met there Dr. Rutherford, Headmaster of Westminster, and his wife, a very pretty and agreeable woman, whom I sat next to at dinner. As she was quite enthusiastic about the very gentlemanly appearance of the Westminster boys, I reminded her of the sobriquet by which Westminster boys were formerly known, and of what Dickens said about them. She knew both, but threw them off as inventions of the enemy, which they very likely were.

At the same house I met Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, and had some interesting conversations with him about Lord Shelburne, whose "Life" he had written. I asked him, in particular, whether he had ever heard that Mr. Disraeli had access to the papers at Lansdowne House, which he had used himself in his biography. I pointed out to him what I don't think he had remarked before: the singular coincidence there was between passages in "Sybil" and Shelburne's Autobiography. Shelburne here speaks repeatedly of the "false government" introduced by the House of Hanover, and says that in George III.'s time it was worn out. Mr. Disraeli says: "Lord Shelburne adopted from the first the Bolingbroke system—a real royalty in lieu of chief magistracy, a permanent alliance with France and a plan of commercial freedom. Lord Shelburne's idea was that the Crown should trust to the rectitude of its own measures to secure a general conviction of its good intentions, and under this conviction to restore the constitution." That is to say, there was to be no more party, and the King was to choose his own Ministers from among the best men of all parties. This in Lord Shelburne's opinion was "the old constitution" which was overthrown at the Revolution. All through Lord Beaconsfield's political writings we find this idea constantly recurring, and with such verbal similarity as to persuade one that he must have seen or heard of these autobiographical fragments before he wrote "Coningsby" and "Sybil." Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice admitted that the coincidence was very striking, but said there was nothing known in the family of Lord Beaconsfield's having seen these papers.

I also asked him about Lord Shelburne and Junius. Lord Shelburne said in the year 1805 that he knew Junius, and that the real author had never been named or even suspected. Sir Philip Francis had never been named before that date. But Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice did not seem to think that his grandfather meant Sir Philip Francis when he said he knew Junius.

In thinking of the editors I have known intimately, the joyous and cheery countenance of Sir J. Knowles at once rises up before me. I knew him when he lived at Clapham, before the *Nineteenth Century* was started. When I went more into Society than I do at present, I used to meet him everywhere. He was always in evidence. Nobody ever saw Knowles sitting silent at a dinner table, or standing alone with his back to the wall at a reception. To the sterling qualities which made him so successful in business and in literature, he added a fund of good spirits and sprightly small talk which never deserted him, and if you saw a group of men enjoying a good laugh in the corner of a drawing-room, nine times out of ten you would find Knowles in the centre of it. He was what I should call a sympathetic editor, and if he refused an article, he always took care to show that he had considered the matter, and never wrote in the short and rather abrupt style in which some editors express their so-called regrets, etc.

Of all the editors whom I have known personally, I knew Hannay the best. But during the years that he edited the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, he, of course, lived in Edinburgh, and I no longer saw him two or three times a week. But his heart was in London all the time

with his old associates, in whose company he had so often heard the chimes, so often shared the tavern bowl, so often discoursed of great old houses, and great gentlemen ancient and modern, till the doors were closed. For such were his favourite subjects, and it was good to hear him talk of Pontius Pilate or Felix, "great Roman gentlemen," and wonder what such men really thought of Christianity. But, as with the old Scottish lawyer described in "Guy Mannering," the practice of mixing wine and revelry with serious business still survived, so with Hannay, himself a Scotsman, the genial tradition usually occurred to him in explanation of any mischance in the *Courant* office. I used to send him leaders from London, and one night, I am told, he rushed into the room where several men were at work, holding between his thumb and first finger about a third of a column. "We can't see the public on this," he cried. "Old K—— says the subject won't bear further expansion, which simply means that H—— is waiting for him at the Gray's Inn Coffee-house."

Sidney Low, who edited the *St. James's Gazette* after Greenwood, had long been a friend of mine; and after I left off night work at the *Standard* I think he took my place. I always thought him a very good writer of English prose, and his recent letters from India place him very high among the masters of the craft. With my old friend Mr. Jeyes, who was assistant editor, I worked for many years in the most complete harmony, and always found him, at all times of the day and night, the same genial, cheerful, and amusing fellow workman. It was in great measure owing to his encouragement that I undertook these "Memories," and I am indebted to him for many suggestions with regard to

the scope and manner of them. I had enjoyed so many opportunities of proving the soundness of his judgment in literary matters that there is hardly a hint which he threw out which I have not more or less acted upon.

I have reserved to the last any mention of Mr. William Blackwood, and it must be held to be for the same reason that the last place in a review or magazine is often the place of honour. I have always found him the best of friends and the best of editors. He takes infinite pains to give the best possible shape to his articles, and makes every allowance for contributors who may be writing from a distance or against time. The services which the Blackwoods have rendered to the Tory party should be gratefully remembered by all its members, high or low, and entitle their magazine to be bracketed with the *Quarterly Review* as one of the two great literary organs which have upheld the Conservative and constitutional cause in this country for nearly a century with equal ability, equal fidelity, and equal conscientiousness.

CHAPTER XVI.

TORY DEMOCRACY.

Lord Randolph Churchill's Definition of Tory Democracy—What Lord Beaconsfield meant by it—Toryism in the Eighteenth Century—Peasantry and Gentry—Tory Proclivities of the Artisan Class—The Peasantry and "Methodies."

"TORY DEMOCRACY" is, as I have explained elsewhere, a contradiction in terms—a solecism. "Democracy," in the proper sense of the word, means a form of government, not a class of the community. It would be rash to assert that it was never used in the latter sense by Lord Beaconsfield himself; but it is, nevertheless, a very misleading use of the word. "Democracy," properly understood, means the government of the few by the many, the government of those best fitted to rule by those who are the least so. Lord Beaconsfield never meant this, and it is impossible that he could have done, for Toryism means exactly the reverse. The definition of "Tory democracy" given in the "Life of Lord Randolph Churchill" may be a good description of Toryism, but certainly not of democracy. "Tory democracy" means, we are told, "ancient permanent institutions becoming the instruments of far-reaching social reform." Good; but this is not democracy. If the representatives of the people in the House of Commons would only give up clamouring for the destruction of these ancient institutions, this

ideal, which was probably Lord Beaconsfield's own, might possibly be realised. But it is naturally the game of the Radicals to prevent any good understanding being arrived at between the Tories and the people. When a Tory speaker on one occasion was beginning to be listened to by an excited Radical mob, a shrewd agitator, seeing that matters were not going well, said to a boy standing near, "Why don't you throw a stone at him?" The boy was only too delighted with the mischief. The stone crashed through a window just behind the speaker's head, and the whole effect of his address was lost. Radicals who cherish the policy of destruction represent themselves to the people as the only party capable of effecting these "far-reaching social reforms," and then when they are returned to Parliament in adequate strength for that purpose, what becomes of our "ancient and permanent institutions?" They use the power which they gain by posing as social reformers for the purposes of political revolution. I don't blame them. The sincere Radical who sees the regeneration of England in the realisation of his own ideas may employ for that end the wisdom of the serpent. It is only to be asked that his tactics should be fully understood.

The distinction which Lord Beaconsfield drew between popular privileges and democratic rights shows the trend of his thoughts on this subject. His mind was running on the Toryism of the eighteenth century, when peasantry and artisans alike, farmers, country gentlemen, manufacturers, and shopkeepers, were, as a rule, Tories, outnumbered in the House of Commons by the nominees of Whig boroughs, and in the Lords, of course, by "the Revolution fami-

lies," but jealous of the oligarchy, devoted to the Church, and haters of German alliances. Burke himself admitted this much.

Lord Beaconsfield believed that the English people on the whole—all below the higher aristocracy—would, if properly led, be on the side of the Church and the Crown. At all events, he thought the experiment worth trying. But he never meant to establish democracy as the form of government in which our foreign and domestic policy should be dictated by the masses. He thought the people could safely be trusted with political power under the guidance of those to whom they had long been accustomed to look up, and that in voting for one who they thought would make the best member of Parliament they would not be voting for one who wished to overthrow what they themselves desired to preserve. In this calculation, however, there were several factors left out, which Lord Beaconsfield either did not, or would not, recognise. In one of his novels he speaks of "agitation" as a newly-developed political force of evil omen. Did he not see that a weapon which had once been so successful was not likely to be readily laid aside. Suppose even four-fifths of the British people to be satisfied with the existing constitution and desirous of no further changes, would the residuum, the remaining one-fifth, let them alone? We all know what small minorities can do when directed by persevering energy, and corresponding ability; and these qualities are never likely to be wanting in any small body of men who stand aloof from the majority, as they set original ideals before themselves, and by the very fact of their differing from their fellows attest their own powers of independent thought. But it is waste of words to dwell on so trite a fact as that

the greatest events are often the work of a few zealots, and proceed from very small beginnings.

If you question a labouring man about politics, it is quite possible that he may hold his tongue, but his silence will be some clue to his thoughts. If he did not agree with his interrogator, he might not well know how to express his dissent in a civil manner. But I don't think he would say what he didn't believe as a way of getting over the difficulty. Such, at least, is my own experience. I have always found, as far as my own memory extends, that the Radicalism, if we are to call it so, of the working man sprang from no hostility to the Church or the gentry, but simply from the desire of bettering his own condition. If this could be done without injury to the gentry or the Church he would be perfectly content.

Between the peasantry and the gentry there is no purely class jealousy such as is so potent an element in Radicalism generally. I have talked a good deal with labourers at different times, and I have never heard them speak disrespectfully of clergymen or landlords as a class. Individuals among them there might be, of course, who were unpopular. But my conviction is that the natural sympathies of the peasantry, if allowed free play, would be in favour of those under whom they and their fathers have lived for so many generations. Such are my memories of what the English peasantry were when I lived more among them than I have done of late. Since that time, no doubt, there has been some change. Ill tongues have come between them and their ancient friends, and whether the effect of this can be effaced or not is the question of the future.

The artisan class, who know very little of the rural

gentry, except what they read in Radical newspapers, have at times shown very strong Tory proclivities. The clergy in the towns have great influence with them, and I don't think the Church of England would be in any danger if the artisans' sympathies were not interfered with by appeals to his material interests. The political Dissenters know this, and they form a kind of mutual insurance society with the Trades Unions, so that the working man can't vote for the one without voting for the other. If by Tory democracy is meant a "confederation" of the minor aristocracy, the mercantile and professional classes, the artisans and the peasantry, in favour of "ancient and permanent institutions," my own memory does not supply me with material for the formation of any strong opinion as to whether it is practicable, though the question is not unlikely to be put to the test at no distant future. But I think if such a combination were possible, it would require a different leader from Lord Randolph Churchill, whose attitude in Parliament has been attributed by his son to very mixed motives. For the leader of such a party, one who can rekindle the smouldering loyalty of the rural population, and persuade the landowners to make such sacrifices as are necessary to render it permanent, must be a man of transparent sincerity as well as of enthusiastic energy. The difficulties he would have to cope with seem to me at this moment almost insurmountable. But the mind of the people does not lie upon the surface. Nobody could have foretold the immense majority which started up at the call of Mr. Pitt, and overthrew a party whose roots were so deeply seated in the soil. Nobody foresaw the sweeping flood of public opinion which,

once let loose, overthrew the old constitution fifty years afterwards.

Among my Tory memories one is that half a century ago the rural population looked up with reverence to the Crown ; and it is possible that, if threatened, they would rally round it again as they did in 1784. One thing, at all events, I recollect very distinctly ; and that is that down to very recent times Dissenters were regarded by the peasantry in general with a very unfavourable eye. I can testify to the survival of this feeling only twenty years ago in more English counties than one. It is a legacy from the eighteenth century, and wherever it still operates is an element to be reckoned with in the labourer's political creed.

Of its existence on a large scale at the date above-mentioned I have clear personal recollections, and I am quite certain that at that time had the " democracy "—if I must call it so—been appealed to on any question in which the Church and the Dissenters were at variance—I mean if this had been the sole issue before them—a large majority would have been found upon the Tory side. How it may be now I cannot say. I am concerned only with what I can remember ; and do I not remember many a sturdy villager who was always ready with a gibe at " the Methodies," as they were called, and many a small freeholder, as independent as any man need be, who, if asked before a coming election how he should vote, would reply, with a twinkle in his eye, " I stan' by the Church " ? As far as such men as these represent the democracy at the present day, Tory democracy—I use the term under protest—may not be altogether a mere dream, though Mr. Balfour is leader of the party.

There was a tradition—a most unfounded one, I needn't say—that Dissenters were not to be trusted. The same prevailed in regard to Roman Catholics, who by certain classes of the community were, and still are, all set down as Jesuits. I remember hearing a distinguished London surgeon, member of a class usually pretty free from theological bias, utter rather too pointed a joke on this subject. Joke though it was, it is evidence of the survival of the old tradition.* If our “ancient and permanent institutions” are to be saved by Tory democracy, Tory democracy will find its most powerful ally in the Church of England.

* See Cobbett's “Cottage Economy,” p. 118.

CHAPTER XVII.

TORY SPORTSMEN.

The Late Lord Stanley of Alderley—A Mahometan Supporter of the Church of England—Coot-shooting at Alderley—George Baden-Powell—Southey's Small Band of Admirers—A Writing Contest with Lord Stanley—Trespassers—Lord Stanley's Eccentricities—Solitary Shoots—Wind and Rain—A Shooting Bishop—The Editor of the *Edinburgh Review*—The Dowager Lady Stanley—Her Treatment of a Fellow-Passenger—More about Shooting—A Murderous Ass—Three Welsh Parsons—At a Welsh Manor House—A Welsh Dissenter and his Little Superstitions—Colonel Talbot—A Reminiscence of the Fourteenth Earl of Derby—Lord Stanley of Alderley's Mastiffs—A Tenants' Ball—Morris Dancing—Making Converts—A Compliment from Lord Strathnairn.

THERE can be no doubt in any well-regulated mind that one of the notes of Toryism is a love of field-sports. At one time of day it was a reproach to the Tory party that they consisted so largely of fox-hunters. Most country gentlemen were Tories, and most country gentlemen were sportsmen. There was just that element of truth in the charge brought against this respectable body of politicians. We are now about to visit scenes where the spirit of Toryism prevailed, if not the letter, and where the pursuit of game and the support of the Church of England, where such support was very much needed, went hand in hand—I am speaking of Wales, and the estates of Lord Stanley of Alderley in Anglesey. That branch of the Stanley family were Whigs, and I suppose that is what the late lord would have called himself

had he called himself anything ; but in practice he was as good a Tory as one could wish to see. He himself, as is well known, was a Mahometan, which he said was a religion "you could live up to." But inquiring at Constantinople, on succeeding to the family property, what was his duty to the Church of England, he was instructed always to support the established religion of the country in which he found himself, and this Lord Stanley did to the utmost of his ability. In building churches and schools, and helping the poorer clergy in a substantial manner, there were few of his order who surpassed or even equalled him. Whether at Penrhôs, his seat near Holyhead, or at Alderley in Cheshire, he was a regular attendant at the parish church. He regarded the Church of England as a great and beneficent institution ; but this did not prevent him from sympathising largely with his co-religionists in other parts of the world ; and if there was a flaw anywhere in his Tory faith, it was in his views regarding India and the rights of the native population. But he seldom talked on such subjects, and you might have stayed with him for a month without ever finding out what he thought about them.

I made his acquaintance through the press. I had written an article in the *St. James's Gazette* about wild pheasants, and Lord Stanley inquired of Greenwood the name of the author. On learning who it was, he at once sent me an invitation to come down and stay with him at Alderley, which, of course, I gladly accepted. This was in November, and I had one day's shooting with him in the woods. His big shoot for the season was over, and the pheasants were rather scarce ; but there were enough to put my skill to the test, and he was

so far satisfied that he begged me to stay another day and help to shoot the coots on the lake. The manner of doing it was this. The birds lie in the reeds and rushes under the banks, and the shooters go out into the middle of the lake in a boat. The coots, when disturbed, fly across the water, often coming well overhead and affording good sporting shots, their flight being not unlike that of a black-cock's. I think we killed twenty-three, it being necessary at times to thin them down, as they drove away the wild fowl.

From this time forward I continued to see a good deal of Lord Stanley. In the following year I went to Alderley in September for partridge shooting, and afterwards on to Penrhôs, where he had a party. Here, as I have said in an earlier chapter, I first met George Baden-Powell, and the day after I arrived he and another man and myself shot twenty-five brace of partridges. Baden-Powell was a very cheery man in a country house, with abundance of jokes always ready. Washington Irving says that the happiest parties are those in which the jokes are small and the laughter abundant. At Penrhôs we often realised the truth of this remark.

Lord Stanley himself was very deaf, and at dinner-time he liked to have ladies whom he knew well sitting one on each side of him, to tell him what was being talked about. There were only a few people staying in the house on the occasion of my first visit; but I think one among them was Mrs. Charles Stanley, the sister-in-law of Dean Stanley, and a widow. I had a good deal of literary conversation with her, for she was fond of books and well read in the English poets. I happened to say that I admired Southey's

poems, upon which she replied that she supposed she and I and the Dean were the only three people left who owned to an affection for Southey; she herself was very fond of him, and the Dean especially admired "The Curse of Kehama," which is my own favourite, too.

While she was there I was the only married man among the shooters, and my wife therefore the only sportsman's wife. There was considerable chaff about what a sportsman's wife ought to be, and it was proposed that Lord Stanley and I should each write an article on the subject and send it up to Greenwood for the *St. James's*, he to insert the one he liked best. They were both copied out by someone else so that he might not recognise the handwriting, and unfortunately he chose mine—at which Lord Stanley was for the moment, I think, really annoyed. But to Greenwood it was the amateur against the professional, a contest which usually has the same ending. I remember Mrs. Charles Stanley took a good deal of interest in it, and always addressed my wife in future as "the sportsman's wife." Lord Stanley, who was an "improving" landlord, and laid out a good deal of money on farm-houses and cottages, had a fancy for getting ladies of his acquaintance to give him their photographs, to be enlarged and painted on panel tiles in one of his farmhouse dairies. My wife figures in one of these in a farmhouse not far from the South Stack.

It was near this spot, too, that I witnessed an amusing incident. We were out shooting, and the keeper caught two trespassers, who were getting nuts or blackberries, or mushrooms, and brought them before his lordship, who immediately began to

examine them. His deafness, however, prevented him from hearing their answers very distinctly. "What, what did he say?" turning to the keeper. "Did he say he never had a mother?" "Ah, my lord," growled the man; "and he wouldn't ha' told you if he had had." The keeper evidently thought that the boy's natural taste for perjury, like Mr. Winkle's, would induce him to deny that he came into the world like other people, the imputation at the same time being coupled with the curious admission that, after all, it might have been so. The boys, of course, were allowed to go free with an admonition. But Lord Stanley was accused of treating other trespassers less mercifully. An old lady picking blackberries not very far from where some partridges had settled, when the birds got up, received a shot in the edge of her ear which sent her off squealing up the village street, screaming that the "old lord" had shot her, and to the last she fully believed that he had done it on purpose. It would only be of a piece with other acts of Tory tyranny, which doubtless she had often heard denounced by local patriots.

Sometimes we had very pleasant house parties at Penrhôs, both in September and December. Lord Stanley's own little eccentricities all helped to enliven us. Nobody was to come down to breakfast on Sunday morning in a shooting jacket; nobody was to shirk coming home from shooting in time for five o'clock tea. Nobody was to make himself specially agreeable to any given lady, young or old, married or single, on pain of being charged with flirting, a crime of which Lord Stanley seemed to entertain a holy horror. I myself, for only walking up and down the terrace in front of the house for ten minutes before dinner, in company

with a middle-aged lady, was solemnly warned that I was suspected of this grave offence, and adjured to be more careful in future. Why, with these ideas in his head, he filled his house with girls and men and women who, when the shooting was over, had nothing else to do but that, I couldn't understand. There was no billiard-room. Cards Lord Stanley detested ; charades I'm sure he would have abhorred as fit only for such damsels as, to use his own words, " did not pretend to be good." This was an affectation he could not tolerate. Speaking of a pretty actress whom we knew, I asked if he would like to be introduced to her. " She does not pretend to be good, I hope, does she ? " Such a hypocrite as that he would not have cared to be acquainted with. I fancy he looked at flirting through much the same spectacles. He had, moreover, considerable conversational powers when he chose to exert them. He had been *attaché* at Constantinople with Lord Strangford ; and he told us, among other good things, that Lord Strangford wore his beard so long that when he wrote it trailed in the ink and described patterns on the paper.

I have said that he rarely talked politics, and he seldom did ; but he read the political articles in the *St. James's Gazette* and the *Nineteenth Century* with avidity, and once when he quartered myself and his nephew Arthur Stanley, then some twenty years of age, at one of his farmhouses, he said, half in joke and half in earnest, that he had committed him to me because of my principles, and in the hope that they might prove infectious. As my principles were strictly Tory, we want no further evidence about Lord Stanley's, or any further justification for classing Penrhôs and Alderley among my Tory memories. His lordship's hopes in

this particular instance were doomed to disappointment, for his nephew parted from me quite uncontaminated with the Tory views which I was intended to instil into him. He is now member for the Eddisbury division of Cheshire, and heir to the barony of Alderley.

Lady Stanley did not often come to Penrhôs ; but she sometimes did, though not in very good health. One event I remember in connection with her—namely, that poor Mr. Garnett (Secretary to the Board of Inland Revenue), the most amiable and obliging of mankind, volunteered to drive her out in the pony chaise, which by some mischance he upset—an accident which her ladyship persisted was no accident at all, but done on purpose.

Of course, I never passed a fortnight in Anglesey without plenty of rain ; but the weather found me bad to beat in those days, when the birds were plentiful. Three times going out with one other man was I left alone in the rain to finish the day with the keeper. One deserter, I remember, was Lord Granard, who thought, I believe, that the birds were not plentiful enough to make the game worth the candle, and he left me between twelve and one to do the best I could in a cold, drizzling rain. However, I persevered and made a fair bag off my own gun considering the weather—eight brace and some rabbits—after Lord Granard left. Another day, when I was left alone almost as soon as we started, I returned wet through with eleven brace. And another I shall never forget when I got home with the water streaming down my back under my clothes, with nine brace. This day I had to fight not only the rain, but the wind, which in Anglesey is no joke. I received the congratulations of the sporting part of the com-

munity on each occasion ; but I think Lord Stanley's thoughts took a different direction. He said I was killing his keepers. He approved, however, of my conservative taste in preferring dogs to driving, and also of my liking for spaniels, of which he was very fond himself. I recall these sporting delights because I owe them to my political principles, and they are essentially Tory memories. Toryism has brought me large returns in the way of sport, if not in silver and gold !

Talking of shooting in the rain, I have another reminiscence of the pursuit of sport under the same difficulties, and of being left to enjoy it alone, which I may as well introduce here. This was at Coghurst, near Hastings, where I was shooting with Mr. Ashburnham. It was late in the season, and we tried for a few pheasants, but they wouldn't rise, and then we tried ferretting for rabbits, but they wouldn't bolt. It was now raining fast, and Mr. Ashburnham said to me that I could go on if I liked but that he should go home, which he did. I stayed on, and we—that is, myself and a couple of men—returned through the wood by the way we came, and ferreted all the holes once again, and, curiously enough, this time the rabbits bolted freely. I shot thirteen, and emerged from the wood rather triumphant.

But to return to Penrhôs. Amongst the guests I remember the Bishop of Bangor, Dr. Lloyd, who was not only a prelate, a Tory, and a scholar, but a sportsman also, and he came out shooting with us in a happy mixture of venatic and episcopal costume which was very interesting. He was not at all a bad shot, and I thought it a privilege to walk by his side. Dr. Johnson, I suppose, would have been shocked at such a spectacle ;

but though a straight Tory I am not a strait-laced one ; and I don't see why Church dignitaries at the present day should not follow pointers and setters as their predecessors followed hawk and hound. And the Bishop of Bangor, as I say, was a scholar, and could, no doubt, have construed at sight either Xenophon's or Oppian's *Cynegetica*, if he had been "put on." It may be doubted whether the Prior of Jervaulx or Archbishop Abbot could have done either. I had not shot very well that day, and missed two or three rabbits under the Bishop's nose ; but I regained my lost ground and my own self-respect in the evening by supplying him with a quotation from Lucan which he had forgotten. Lord Stanley was fond of classical quotations, but he did not know that one, and I think was rather aggrieved at my ostentation in quoting so little known a poet. He had theories of his own about disputed passages in Virgil such as "*Quisque suos patimur manes*" and Dido's promise, "*Quam mihi quum dederis cumulatam morte remittam.*" The fourth *Æneid* had evidently made a great impression on him, and he referred to it in the House of Lords more than once.

Once while I was at Penrhôs Mr. Reeve, the editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, and Mrs. Reeve came to stay for a few days. He knew an old friend of mine, then Consul at Palermo, who had for many years been a constant contributor to the *Edinburgh*—William Stigant. He said he was a very useful man, knew two or three literatures, and could write well, but he was always discontented. "He has got," said Mr. Reeve, "almost the best consulate which the Government have to give away, the pages of the *Edinburgh* are always open to him, and yet he is for ever grumbling." I who knew the

man knew this to be true ; but then Stigant was an out-and-out Liberal, and I remember very well when the third volume of Macaulay's History came out and we read on the concluding page that it might come to be a question whether it would not be necessary "to sacrifice liberty in order to save civilisation," Stigant was gloriously indignant. "What can he mean by it, Hannay ?" he exclaimed, with a dark frown. "Oh," said Hannay cheerfully, "there can be no doubt about what he means."

I was glad to make the acquaintance of Mr. Reeve, and it led afterwards to my becoming a contributor to the *Edinburgh* myself. If it should be asked how I, a strict Tory, could write for an equally strict Whig review, I can only answer by referring them to the meeting between Serjeant Buzfuz, counsel for the plaintiff, and Serjeant Snubbin, counsel for the defendant, in *Bardell v. Pickwick*, and Mr. Pickwick's horror at the cold-blooded manner in which the two rival advocates wished each other good morning.

Mrs. Vaughan, widow of the former Master of the Temple, once Headmaster of Harrow, and Vicar of Doncaster, came to stay at Penrhôs while I was there. She was Dean Stanley's sister, I think, and I was pleased to meet her, as, of course, she knew the Halfords very well, and had often met my elder brothers when she was staying with them. She inquired after them, and asked many questions about my father, whom she remembered as the oldest clergyman in the diocese and the representative of a bygone age. Lord Stanley always called her by the name of a popular actress. His general ideas about actresses, which were well known, gave the joke what little point it had.

I had some interesting political talks once with the Dowager Lady Stanley, whose husband, Lord Stanley's father, was a well-known Whig, President of the Board of Trade and Postmaster-General under Lord Palmerston. His widow must have heard all that passed in the inner Whig circle on public affairs; and it was she who told me what I have already mentioned in another chapter—she told me that the Whig party feared a collision between the Crown and the Parliament as long as Prince Albert lived. She was a special admirer of John Morley's writings, and was altogether a very well-informed and amusing old lady, quite of the old school. Once, I was told, but for this I cannot vouch, that when she got into the train at Holyhead she took a seat in the carriage which had previously been taken possession of by some gentleman, who had left his coat and hat to keep it for him. Her ladyship removed these without the smallest scruple, and when the gentleman returned and politely informed her that the seat was his, she took no notice. He then became rather importunate, when the lady looked out of the window and called to the guard, bidding him "take away this troublesome person."

Lord Stanley himself was a total abstainer, and though, of course, there were the usual wines at dinner and after, it cannot be said that even when the ladies had retired, the bottle circulated very freely. I remember Lord Granard whispering to me as the decanter came into my hand, "I say, give us a back-hander." As we did not stay very long in the dining-room, we should have had a longish evening to get through but for Lord Stanley's rule of giving us all our candles at ten o'clock, the gentlemen retiring to smoke and the ladies to discuss

the gentlemen, with that quick perception of character which Lord Beaconsfield calls "the triumph of intuition."

Breakfast was nominally at nine, and would be over before ten, when Lord Stanley would usually ask one of the party, generally myself, to go out and see the keepers and tell them what time he would be ready to start, which was usually about an hour before we actually did set out. But in this matter you had to mind your p's and q's. The sporting party were expected to wait in the stable-yard with the keepers till Lord Stanley came out, which was not till he had done his letters; but it was high treason to quit the spot even for a moment, and if any gentleman was missing when our host hurried out, even though he rejoined the group in a few seconds, he suffered heavily. But the shooting was good when you once got out. Turnips, potatoes, and barley stubble interspersed among rocks covered with fern and heather, made it ideal partridge ground for shooting over with dogs; but Lord Stanley would rarely take the trouble to beat it carefully, and as he seldom stayed out above four hours, of which a part was given to lunch, we never made any heavy bags. The best days I remember were with three guns thirty-seven brace, and with four guns fifty-one brace; but on these occasions we had longer days. I learned for the first time while shooting in Anglesey how fond partridges are of seaweed. They would often lie among the stones on the beach, and in any field manured with seaweed you were sure to find them.

The cover shooting in the winter was better managed. The head keeper had the direction of that, and we used to go on until it grew dusk. I forget what the bags

used to average, but we always had plenty of shooting. It was a good place for woodcocks, and there was abundance of rabbits. There were some good snipe bogs on the estate, but I never happened to be there in favourable weather, the bogs being generally too full of water. But rabbit shooting was what Lord Stanley loved best, and I have seldom seen a better rabbit shot. He was very keen over this sport, and you had to look out for yourself when you were anywhere within range of his gun. In shooting at a hare which was almost between my legs, he narrowly, of course, missed peppering me pretty sharply. He saw that, but he only smiled and said: "You'd have been a great loss to the party."

Our partridge days used to wind up sometimes with tea at "Ellen's Tower," a tower on the edge of the cliff near the South Stack lighthouse, on which it looked down. The ladies were driven up from Penrhôs to meet us there, and sometimes on these occasions we visited the lighthouse.

The rock on which the lighthouse stands has some psychological interest—for such, at least, as believe that animals have souls. The lighthouse man used to employ a donkey for the necessary work of the place, and the donkey was lord of the greensward which encircled the edifice. Thinking that he was too hardly worked, his master bought a pony to help him; but Johnny would have no such intruder on the ground which he had so long called his own, and he deliberately murdered the pony, if not with "pleasing circumstances of good taste," like Toad-in-the-Hole's tom cat, at least with a kind of devilish ingenuity of which his owner declared himself a witness. He enticed the pony by degrees close up to the edge of the rock, and then suddenly turned

round and kicked him over. The fame of this animal has, I believe, spread beyond Anglesey, and it is a pity that he did not live while De Quincey was alive, so that he might have been immortalised in "Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts."

It is superfluous to say that Welsh clergymen are almost of necessity Tories; and the three whom I met in Anglesey happened also to be three of the best shots I ever met. Mr. Kyffin of Llan Badrig was one, Mr. Morgan of Bodewryd was another, and Mr. Jones of Grafton in Cheshire, though I made his acquaintance at Penrhôs, was a third. The three were fine specimens of the Church Militant, and I thought, if the fate of the Church in Wales was likely to be decided by blows, here were three champions worthy of her. Jones was understood to be mighty powerful with the gloves, and when the head keeper ventured to say he should like to have a friendly round with him, and thought he could "give him something to do," one of the party, likewise a handy man with his fives, said he'd better not try, for that Jones would kill him. I was amused some time after this by the keeper taking me aside confidentially, and asking me, in reference to Jones, who was walking with us that day, "Does that gentleman practise, sir?" using the word "practise" as he would have done about a lawyer or doctor. I was able to assure him not only that Jones "practised," but that his services were highly valued, and that his sporting and pugilistic merits were as nothing compared to his prowess in the pulpit.

About ten miles inland from Penrhôs Lord Stanley had another estate of about 1,500 acres. Here there was no house, and he used to stay with one of his tenants and distribute any friends whom he might ask to shoot

with him among the others. I used to have a very pleasant time here. I was always in the same farmhouse, sometimes with two ladies, at other times with some male companions. It was an old Manor-house—Plas Bodewryd, or, as we should say, Bodewryd Hall—and was a very picturesque old place. The partridge shooting all round was excellent, though there were no rocks or fern or heather to speak of. But by living in a farmhouse, and shooting a good deal by myself, and talking, as far as it was possible, with the farmers and labourers, I got some knowledge of the nature of Welsh Dissent. But of that presently.

The ladies whom Lord Stanley used to invite to this pleasant retreat were often the daughters or sisters of officers or others whom he had known in his early days. I remember Miss Meadows Taylor very well. She was the daughter of Colonel Meadows Taylor, of the Indian Army, whose regiment was one of the very few which did not join the mutineers. He married an Indian princess, and his daughter's pedigree was lost in the mists of antiquity. Another very accomplished lady, a Frenchwoman, Mlle. Belloc, was frequently one of the party; she was a very clever artist, and both were there when Mrs. Kebbel came to Bodewryd. I also in her absence had the pleasure of entertaining Miss Kenealy, the well-known lady doctor and novelist, the daughter of Dr. Kenealy, of Tichborne celebrity. She adjured me never to work more than three hours a day. It was as much, she declared, as anyone's brain could stand without injury. The last two ladies with whom I shared the lodgings at Bodewryd about three years ago were Miss Hepworth Dixon, the authoress, daughter of Mr. Hepworth Dixon, the well-known editor of the

Athenæum, and a young lady not out of her teens, I think, the daughter of a neighbouring clergyman. Lord Stanley lost no opportunity of a joke, sometimes sailing rather near the wind, and when he asked Miss Dixon how I had entertained them, she gave me an excellent character, adding, "And he told us some very good stories." "I hope," said Lord Stanley, "they were proper ones." "Oh!" said Miss Dixon, "think of blushing eighteen!"

The rabbit shoot at Bodewryd was Lord Stanley's great day, and from all the farmhouses came his lady guests to witness the sport. This took place among some high banks, or steep hillocks thickly covered with gorse; and as each was beaten in turn, the guns were planted round, while Lord Stanley took his stand upon the top, with the lady whom he had chosen for his companion that day by his side. There he stood up clear against the sky like a figure on a monument, and as there was abundance of rabbits, the firing for some time would be pretty hot. The rabbits, when they did not choose to face the guns—that is, to bolt across the grass from one bank to another, ran up-hill and made for the other side. As long as they were crossing the level bit of ground at the top you were safe enough; but an ascending or descending rabbit placed the guns below in some jeopardy. I never saw an accident happen—not, at least, in rabbit shooting, though it is the most liable to accidents of any kind of sport. Lord Stanley did not like the rabbits missed, and he liked still less to see an inattentive gun let a rabbit go by within shot without firing at it. Then the warder on the hill let you know what he thought of you, his trumpet giving forth no uncertain sound.

I am very fond of rabbit shooting, and used to enjoy these days very much ; but the partridge shooting, as I have said, was very good, too—very good for ground where there was no gamekeeper and the game was left entirely to the care of the tenants. I could go out any day by myself with a boy and a spaniel, and make sure in any ordinary season of eight or ten brace, sometimes getting eleven or twelve, if birds, gun, and dog behaved properly.

The tenants themselves on this part of the estate were all very pleasant men, and many of them well educated and well read. The tenant of Bodewryd farm, who died after my fourth or fifth season there, was a particularly intelligent and gentlemanly man. He used always to dine with us, and took the bottom of the table. He had a great sense of humour, with a “slow, wise smile,” like that of Tennyson’s miller. I talked with him sometimes about the Church in Wales ; and though in speaking to a Churchman and a friend of his landlord like myself, he was naturally rather reserved, I think I perceived that it was rather the unequal distribution of Church property than any question of Church government, or even doctrines, which oppressed his conscience. The condition of the poorer clergy in Wales—that is, the majority of the parochial clergy—no doubt gave point to this argument. He had sense enough to see, however, that Disestablishment, if it tended to equality, could certainly not banish poverty. And I should think that with him, as with many other Welsh Dissenters, it was rather because Methodism had become an hereditary creed with them, which they were bound in honour to stand by, than for any other reason, that they remained Nonconformists.

Our host was, as I have said, a very sensible and well-informed man, but some old rural superstitions still lingered in the back of his head, and I was very much amused one day when, speaking of an old woman who was reputed by the whole neighbourhood to be a witch, he assured me gravely that she was "quite harmless," implying that her equivocal character made some such assurance necessary. I remember, too, that a hare used to lie in a neighbouring churchyard, and had been shot at once or twice and missed. My friend would not have liked to shoot that hare himself. He had read the "Ancient Mariner," and perhaps thought of the albatross. He was not so far gone as to have supposed that the witch, after the manner of her kind, sometimes took the form of a hare. However, I destroyed the mystery, if there was one, by shooting the hare myself.

The farmers' wives, daughters, and sisters whom I met in this part of Anglesey were often very agreeable and ladylike women, and I could not help saying to myself very often, both of themselves and their husbands, fathers and brothers, Why are they not Tories like their ancestors, who at one time of day were the staunchest Cavaliers and Churchmen going? The Church let them go, and, ceasing to be Churchmen, they ceased to be Tories. Alas! alas! considering the condition of Wales at the present moment, an old Tory may be forgiven for saying with Wordsworth, that "the wiser mind Mourns less for what time takes away Than what it leaves behind."

There were more pheasants, I think, at Penrhôs than at Alderley, for the game had been more strictly preserved there by Lord Stanley's uncle, Mr. Owen

Stanley, and the covers, it may be, were better situated for shooting. The whole country, too, was much wilder and more picturesque. But the tenantry and labourers were not, perhaps, so well affected as they were at Bodewryd. On the Penrhôs estate there were many very small tenants, who had learned bad ways from the Irish population at Holyhead. They would always insist on keeping dogs, whether they had any sheep or cattle to look after or not. This was a special grievance with Lord Stanley, who, in his onslaught on the dogs, occasionally reminded me of Miss Trotwood and the donkey boys. They certainly were a great nuisance—as the owners made no attempt to keep them in, and they were allowed to ramble all over the fields in the shooting season. I have sometimes been wicked enough to imagine that this was done on purpose, when they knew Lord Stanley was coming.

At Alderley I met two very keen sportsmen. One was Colonel Talbot, son-in-law of the fourteenth Earl of Derby, who was leader of the Tory party from 1846 to 1870. Colonel Talbot was a capital shot, and a very frank talker, and he enlivened the interval between the second beats, or, when sport grew slack, by a variety of choice anecdotes, sometimes turning round to me after he had told one and saying, “You know, Mr. Kebbel, this is not to go into the *Pall Mall Gazette*.” There was very little fear of that in the majority of instances! One or two others, which did not go into the *Pall Mall Gazette*, went into my little biography of Lord Derby; and one of them I think so interesting that it will bear being repeated among these “Memories.” Some of the Earl’s covers adjoined the coal-pits, and with the colliers he was on excellent terms. They never touched his

game, but always turned out in large numbers to see the covers shot, enjoying the sport keenly, and betting eagerly on the guns. The pitmen, indeed, almost worshipped him, and knew that they were sure of his indulgence or forbearance on any just cause. On one occasion when his party was approaching the pits, a deputation waited on him to beg him not to allow a particular hare to be shot. She had made her form on one of the "spoil banks" as the mounds are called on which the refuse is deposited, and the men had tamed her so that she would eat out of their hands. It is needless to say that their prayer was granted, and an edict issued placing puss under protection for the remainder of her natural existence. On these occasions he was always attended by some of his tenantry, with whom he laughed and joked at his ease. He relied, like Charles II., on his ready wit to extricate himself from any difficulties into which his love of fun might lead him; and it certainly never fell in vain on the ears of the Lancashire farmers, nor, if all reports are true, on the ears of Sir Robert Peel either.

I feel indebted to Colonel Talbot for putting me at my ease with regard to a certain habit of mine which had incurred both the reproaches and the ridicule of my friends and acquaintances: I refer to my love of taking plenty of luggage with me whenever I travel. Colonel Talbot was alone at Penrhôs, but when he left I observed that he had bags and portmanteaus with him sufficient, as many would think, for a large family. I ventured to make some remark about it, when he replied, with admirable good sense: "Why shouldn't I make myself comfortable?" Why, indeed? Since that time I have never been afraid to meet my enemies in

the gate to whatever country house I might be going, or whatever luggage I might carry.

Another well-known shot who came to Alderley for the cover shooting was Mr. Bucknill, of the *Field*. He was a very clean shot, and I have seen him knock over ten or a dozen pheasants one after the other, all dead before they touched the ground.

A fine breed of mastiffs had long been kept up at Alderley, the genuine old English mastiff, and very savage. There were two left when I first went there. One of them Lord Stanley was in the habit of taking out walking with him, and if he met anyone whom he knew, and stopped to speak to him, the faithful creature would scan the stranger narrowly, and if he raised his voice, as, of course, he naturally would do on account of Lord Stanley's deafness, "Tiger" would utter a deep growl, as much as to let the speaker know that if there was going to be a row he had better look out for himself. The fun was that as Lord Stanley could not hear the dog growl, he could not understand his friend's embarrassment.

But the great event in the winter at Alderley was the Tenants' Ball, to which all the tenants, large or small, were invited, with their wives and daughters. The whole house party—it was never a very large one—adjourned to the great hall immediately after dinner, when the ball was opened. The first time I was there Lady Stanley was present, and danced the first dance, I think, with the steward. Spencely, the head keeper, was also held in high honour, and there were several good-looking young men among the younger farmers, and two or three pretty girls among their sisters. But all alike, whether pretty or not, were nicely dressed,

and had nice manners. They bore no traces of their rustic occupations. Their complexions had not been injured, either by wind, frost, or sun, and there were more pale faces than rosy ones among them. Several of the girls who danced till three or four o'clock in the morning had to walk home through the snow to be in time for milking at seven. The great feature of this evening was the morris dance, something like an ordinary country dance, with this difference: that a handkerchief was held across under which each couple had to duck, chanting meanwhile the following beautiful fragment of some ancient legendary ditty, as old, perhaps, as the Heptarchy:

This is it, and that is it,
This is morris dancing;
My poor father broke his leg
All o' morris dancing.

I don't believe that this kind of morris dance had anything to do with the Moors. This, however, is a question which must be referred to Mr. Jonathan Oldbuck. As the handkerchiefs were of different colours, the effect was very pretty. Some young ladies from the neighbourhood were of the party, but both gentlemen and ladies were bound to mix freely with all the rest of the company; and as some of the male performers danced with less grace than vigour, you might see the Squire's daughter swung fairly off her legs in the arms of a stalwart yeoman, who preserved a face of imperturbable gravity the while as of one engaged in a solemn duty with which there was to be no trifling.

These visits became annual ones for nearly twenty years, and the period which they embrace, 1884-1903, I shall always regard as one of the happiest of my life.

But I did not take my leave of Wales and Cheshire without a secret twinge of conscience, in that I had not fulfilled the duty tacitly assigned to me: I had not attempted to make one proselyte. I think Mr. Arthur Stanley, who will laugh if he ever sees this, will acknowledge that I neglected this duty most severely.

I have had success, though, in that line elsewhere. I have every year, for some forty years, been to stay with a college friend in Suffolk, who had some nice shooting, but was a Whig after the manner of his forefathers. For a long time I studiously abstained from politics as such. I talked a good deal about old manners and customs, with which I knew he had a secret sympathy. I got him to see how much better the birds used to behave in former days before Free Trade had compelled farmers to farm economically, and to mow their stubbles, a direct consequence, I assured him, of Liberal legislation. I dwelt on the many virtues of the good old rector, who belonged to the old school; and also on the inestimable value of a good acquaintance with Horace and Homer, and on the charm of the old University life, sneered at by Liberal reformers. By constantly expatiating on these various memories and sympathies, which all tended in one direction, without ever mentioning such words as Whig or Tory, Liberal or Conservative, or even discussing any of the political questions of the period, I saw with satisfaction that I was making an impression on him, and that he was beginning to colour like a meerschaum pipe. He has continued to grow in grace, and is now on all municipal questions a thorough-going Tory. I don't think he has yet voted Tory at a Parliamentary election, but I expect he will do at the next! When I have done thus much for a

man, have I not more than repaid him for all the partridges and pheasants I have shot over his ground ? This is an action on which a man can look back with comfort on his death-bed. I have brought one sheep into the fold, and that is more, perhaps, than every Tory can say !

I have said a good deal about shooting in these reminiscences, and the Game Laws and Toryism are, without doubt, very closely connected together. A good deal of absurd prejudice on the subject has been eradicated from the public mind during the last half-century, and the diminution of poaching since the passing of the Ground Game Act in 1881 has done away with another set of arguments less sentimental, but equally illogical. The starving peasant snaring a rabbit for his sick wife has disappeared from the note-book of the pseudo-philanthropist. As game no longer presents the same temptation to the criminal classes that it did when hares and rabbits were more abundant, the public are no longer shocked by so many fatal affrays between keepers and poachers as used to occur in a former generation. There remains, then, only the political argument that, as shooting is one of the principal amusements and most invigorating exercises of the country gentlemen, and helps largely to keep them resident on their estates, game should be abolished on this ground alone. "We don't want the country gentleman," say the Radicals. "We should do better without him, and instead of encouraging him to remain where he is, we should do everything to rob his position of all its pleasures and privileges, of all its influence and authority, and so gradually starve him out. We have done something towards accomplishing this result, and mean to do more. The game must go."

So they talk, and so they have talked before ; but they have never before been strong enough to make it more than talk, and I doubt if they are now. I have had a good deal of conversation, both with labourers and with farmers, on the subject. Among the latter, no doubt, is to be found some discontent, though not very deep or very wide, with the existing system, but not with the game laws. With the former there is a feeling that it is rather hard for a man to go to prison for taking a rabbit ; but they certainly do not desire that there should be no rabbits to take. They think a little poaching, though confessedly wrong, should be winked at on occasions, like drunkenness ; but as for abolishing the game laws, exterminating game, and suppressing the sport of shooting, they know a trick worth two of that. The farmer's grievance, where he has any, is not that game is protected, but that he has not the right to it himself. I was talking not long ago to a highly respectable young farmer in Hampshire. "I think the tenant ought to have the game," he said. "Well," I said ; "but the tenant and the landlord can't both have it. Which has the prior right ?" But he declined to argue the question, nor did it matter. I only had from him what I have had from other tenant farmers, the acknowledgment that what they want is not the repeal of the game laws, but the transference of the game to themselves. We should hear nothing about the damage done to crops then.

On the top of this very natural desire to seize what does not belong to you, because you happen to like it, comes another grievance of a much more petty character. I have known farmers who couldn't bear to see the landlord or his keeper walking across their land.

This was purely personal jealousy. I recollect very well as I was walking through a country village with the squire of the parish on the way to some partridge shooting, a tenant rushing out of his house to beg his landlord not to walk through his beans. Nine times out of ten walking through beans does them no harm if you don't let the dogs run about in them. Still, I have no doubt that in this instance the landlord would have received the request courteously had it been made courteously, and have promised to be as careful as he could be. But the man's manner was most offensive. The fact was, he did not like the squire on his land at all, and he took this way of showing it. My friend, who knew his man, answered him very shortly, and went on his way, taking the beans as they came without doing either more or less harm to them in consequence of what had passed. But I mention this little incident as illustrative of the temper which prevails among a certain class of tenant farmers—a very limited class, I am sure, more noisy than numerous, and actuated rather by social jealousy than by agricultural conditions.

But as for the peasantry, many of them look on fox-hunters and pheasant shooters as their best friends. Neither the one nor the other can do *them* any harm. The agricultural labourer leaves his plough, the shoemaker his last, the tailor his shears as soon as it is known that the hounds are hard by. Cobbett describes how he left his farm work the moment he heard the harriers; and so it is still in every village in England. If one runs with the hounds there are shillings to be picked up by holding horses, opening gates, and showing the way to bewildered horsemen. In cover shooting there are beaters wanted with so much a day, and a luncheon or

supper besides. No, no. Put the question to the peasant fair and square, without any collateral issues mixed up with it : Does he wish to see game destroyed, and shooting abolished ? and the answer would be almost universally, No.

Before quitting the subject of shooting, I may mention that my first experience of driving was on the estates of a famous hero, Lord Strathnairn. I myself belong to the canine period, and was never much of a hand at the butts. I could kill birds pretty fairly sometimes, but never really well. On this occasion, however, I was lucky. I was staying with some friends in the neighbourhood of Newsells, Lord Strathnairn's place in Hertfordshire, and through them I received an invitation to shoot there. The game was not very abundant, nor had I been doing very well ; but near the end of the day, when I was standing next to Lord Strathnairn, I happened to kill two birds right and left as they came high over my head. His lordship complimented me on my skill, though I knew it to be exceptional ; but a compliment from Lord Strathnairn was praise from Sir Hubert Stanley.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TORY AGRICULTURISTS.*

Where the Allotment System Originated—Difference between Allotments and Small Holdings—The “Tatur Field”—Advantages of a Large System of Peasant Farming—A Call to Landowners for Combined Action—A Co-operative Farm Forty Years Ago—The Tenant Farmer, Old Style.

FROM sport to agriculture is a short step, and of agricultural questions my Tory memories are pretty full. The whole question, which may be embraced under the one head of *La Petite Culture*, was early taken up by the “clergy, nobility, and gentry” (for such was the order in which they were always placed) in the midland counties, who were, with few exceptions, Tories; and I think Leicestershire was almost the first, if not the first, English county in which the allotment system took root. This originally was, and should still be kept, something quite distinct from the small holding system, which is intended to encourage the growth of a class of small cultivators, whether as owners or occupiers, and thus to distribute the land among a larger number. The allotment system, on the contrary, was intended only to supplement wages, and to compensate the labourers for what they had lost by the enclosure of wastes and commons. It was never intended that the

* Part of this chapter has already appeared in “The Agricultural Labourer,” by T. E. Kebbel, 4th edition, 1907.

allotment should do more than occupy the labourer's leisure hours—such time, that is, as he could spare from his daily farm work, by which he earned his weekly wages. At first it was made a condition that he should only grow vegetables and fruit ; but this it was found practically impossible to enforce ; and a bit of barley for the pig very soon came to be recognised as a legitimate crop, together with the cabbages and potatoes. The original name given to these allotments was field-gardens, to distinguish them from cottage gardens, which in some parts of England were, and are, large enough to serve nearly the same purpose. But that was not so in the Midlands, as I recollect them, and it was from this part of England that the allotment system spread as from a centre, for in those counties it satisfied a real want.

The original intention of the allotment was long preserved, and may be so still, in the name by which the village people called it. The Kilby allotments were always known as “the tatur field.” They consisted of about eight acres, which my father let off from his glebe in portions of about a quarter of an acre. This gave some thirty allotments, and as the population of the village was then only four hundred, of which tenant farmers, small tradesmen, carpenters, and shoemakers formed a considerable proportion, this would give an allotment for every other family, or, if you deduct the stockings, as they were called, or framework knitters, a substantial flake of the population in every Leicestershire village, and count in only the agricultural labourers pure and simple, for whose use the allotments were at first exclusively intended, we shall have a rood of ground for nearly every family in the village. The system

worked happily as long as I can recollect anything about it, my memory of such things dating from the early forties. But the "tatur field" had then been in existence some ten or twelve years, if not more; and when, after my father's death, we left Kilby, in 1868, it was still flourishing, and was continued by his successor, John Halford. My father's example had been extensively followed, and before I left home I think there was hardly a village within twenty miles of us without its allotment grounds. But since that time the larger question of Small Holdings has come to the front, and what ought to be regarded as a purely economic or social question has drifted into politics, and become the battlefield of parties.

The advantages and disadvantages of peasant farming and peasant proprietorship have been almost exhaustively discussed by experts on both sides. With the Socialist theory that the labourers have a right to the land independently of all questions of expediency, I have nothing to do in these pages. You cannot rob a man of his birthright because of the use he is likely to make of it. That is his affair. If the peasantry possess this right, the certainty that if it were conceded the large majority would be paupers in the third generation cannot be urged against it. If they choose to rush upon their fate, they must do so. But as I recognise no such right in any class of the community, land, like other property, belonging to those who can get it, and those to whom they choose to leave it, I shall content myself with recording what I remember of the system myself when I lived in the country, and what I have been told by those who have equal or better means of judging.

I should add that, in theory, I am wholly in favour of a large class of peasant farmers. The possibility of rising into that position is a great stimulus to the day labourer, and largely helps him to keep sober, frugal, and industrious. It is also a means by which the quality of our skilled labour, which has so greatly deteriorated of late, might be permanently improved, as the peasant would know that he could never succeed in a small farm unless he were a skilled workman, and the disinclination to learn agricultural work demanding special skill, characteristic of the present race of labourers, might thus be overcome. All my Tory traditions, sympathies, and instincts would make me look with joy on the spectacle of a contented and prosperous agricultural peasantry spread over the soil in much larger numbers than at present, satisfied with their own position, and not seeking to rise out of it. Is this a dream?

I would fain believe not. But to make it more than a dream, the whole landed aristocracy must put their shoulders to the wheel and their hands into their pockets, and that, too, without delay, or the question will be taken out of their hands, if this indeed has not been done already. To see our "Territorial Constitution" preserved in all its essential integrity would make a happy man of many a true Tory; but unless the old ties between the gentry and the peasantry can be revived, I fear that its future is precarious. Schemes are undoubtedly on foot for the compulsory creation of small farms by robbing the landowners of what is necessary for the purpose. I here repeat what I wrote in the *Nineteenth Century* (July, 1906), that if the landed aristocracy know in this their day the things pertaining to

their peace, they will endeavour to make some combined move to frustrate this revolutionary project. I shall make no apology for quoting here what I wrote in that Review :

The necessity for a powerful Conservative Party to oppose those measures of "dangerously Socialistic character," as the Duke of Devonshire described them last March, is becoming more obvious each day. Such a party will be required not only to-morrow and the next day, but for many a long year to come ; and I believe it can be formed, if what I will again call the "Country Party" will bestir themselves, and look facts and tendencies in the face. Let them only regain the counties and all will go well. The way to regain the counties is to satisfy the villages. And for this purpose a large and well-organised system of peasant-farmers should be inaugurated by the great landlords. It must not be the work of a few individuals ; there must be a combination of the whole body throughout the kingdom. Every landowner with an estate of a certain magnitude should be able to set aside so many acres to be let out in small holdings. If he were a pecuniary loser by the process, he would be a gainer of what is far more valuable, in the security which he would purchase for the rest of his property. Such a system as this inaugurated and kept on foot by the whole landed aristocracy, would bind the peasantry to their natural leaders, checkmate the agrarian agitators, and insure to the agricultural and landed interest sufficient weight in the House of Commons, not only to protect itself from all further assaults, but to protect the other institutions of the country from that combined attack which his Grace of Devonshire—no violent Conservative or panic-stricken alarmist—believes to be at hand. This can only be done, of course, by the formation of a great Landowners' Association with a common fund for such expenses as the change may necessitate. The richer ones must pay for the poorer, on the same principle as the equalisation of rates. I am familiar with the objections that landlords could not afford the expense of putting up new farms and farm buildings, and homesteads. But it is difficult to believe that among the whole landed aristocracy, from men with half a million a year down to men with five thousand, the money could not be found, if all alike were in earnest. They could do it if they liked. We want an organised combination, embracing the whole landlord class from the Tweed to the Solent, who should take the matter into their own hands and give the labourers what they want, without any legislative interference.

The process of buying up small freeholds by the larger landowners in the neighbourhood has been going on for years all over the kingdom. When I was a boy there were in my father's parish eight small freeholds besides the Wistow property, which, of course, formed a large part of it. The owner of only one of these was not a peasant proprietor, but a yeoman, owning a hundred acres. The others were not above the rank of peasants. But these little farms, if farms they can be called, were with one exception all grass, on which the owner kept some sheep and a cow or two, and, as far as I can remember, even the man who had no other business did well. But most of them combined with their small holdings some other business, and made the one play into the other. The butcher had some acres of grass. The village carrier and the village publican had two or three fields. Only one man that I can remember came to grief while we lived in the village, and he was half an imbecile. Now, every one of these bits of land was bought up by the owner of the principal estate, and the most deserving peasant in the parish might look in vain for anything like a small farm.

I know that the labourers possess rather exaggerated ideas of what can be done with "a bit o' land." "It was a poor tale," they would say of six or eight acres of land, "if a man couldn't get a living off that." They took no account of bad seasons, of the loss of stock, of any of the innumerable accidents to which agriculture is liable; and here is the initial difficulty of reviving on a large scale the system of *la petite culture* as it exists in France and Belgium. No ordinary English labourer—and I am not speaking of exceptional men—could ever provide for a rainy day on the proceeds of a six-acre

farm. He hasn't got it in him. He couldn't live as the French peasant lives ; and we find, in fact, in spite of what I have said, that the peasantry are not very keen about the land, and would prefer a substantial rise in wages, with the certainty of a livelihood, to the risks and hardships of a farm.

There are few questions, however, about which the evidence is so conflicting.

The allotment system now is quite a different thing from what it was in my early days. The legislation of 1887 has abolished the distinction between an allotment and a small holding. The occupier of an allotment is now brought under the operation of the Agricultural Holdings Acts, and his relations with the owner are purely commercial and business-like. The system, as I remember it, was so administered as to exercise a good moral effect. The allottee knew that if he misconducted himself, became a notorious drunkard or evil liver, it was in the power of his landlord to turn him out at will. It was known also that to no such man would an allotment be granted. Let small farms be multiplied to any extent. Let it be possible for every agricultural labourer who has shown that he possesses the qualities necessary to ensure success to be able to look forward to ending his days in independence. The allotment system may contribute something towards helping him to attain this position ; but I suppose we have now outgrown all moral considerations, as savouring too much of paternal government. I am bound to add that so competent a judge as Lord Onslow, who has been kind enough to correspond with me on the subject, does not take the same view of it. He highly approves of the Act passed twenty years ago.

Among my mingled agricultural and Tory memories, I recall the visions of a co-operative farm which was started many years ago on the estate of Mr. Gurdon at Assington in Suffolk. It is nearer forty than thirty years since I was there ; and whether the experiment has been a continued success or not, I don't know. It was started by Mr. Gurdon as long ago as 1830, so that when I first saw the land, the system had been in operation for more than one generation. I was shown over the land by a very intelligent young fellow, who amused me by his mode of explaining why it was disliked by the farmers : the labourers who were members of this co-operative society "wouldn't stand being swore at," like those who were not. At first there was only one farm of thirty-three acres, the company being started by a loan from the landlord of £400. In 1854 a new farm of 212 acres was taken on, assisted by a similar loan. The members' subscriptions were £3 apiece for the old farm, and £3 10s. for the new one. There were two companies, one for each farm, the smaller consisting of twenty-one members and the larger one of thirty-six. How many there may be now, I don't know ; but it must be borne in mind that these members were all agricultural labourers, working for the farmers just the same. Their share in the co-operative business did not turn them into small farmers, cultivating land for themselves. The farms were superintended by a manager under whom the members could work if they chose as they would do under any of the farmers. Their share might increase their income, but it did not alter their position. Thus the particular moral effect of the small holding system to which Lord Salisbury attached so much importance is here wholly wanting ; but the

system had a moral side to it all the same, just like the allotment system. No member was allowed to receive parish relief, or to retain his share if convicted of a felonious offence, and no member was allowed to live more than three miles away from the parish.

There was also at Assington a co-operative store, but I cannot say that my Tory sympathies went out very warmly either to the stores or to the farms. I am, perhaps, what I saw somebody called the other day, "a rampant Individualist." I must say I do regret the disappearance from our country villages of many of those minor industries which gave life to the place, and afforded a variety of interest to the little community. If we are always to be guided by considerations of political economy, why not apply that rigid science all round? And certainly political economy has little to say in favour of small holdings—in favour, that is, of substituting *la petite culture* for *la grande*, all over the country, and establishing it permanently as the national system of agriculture; and this, of course, is what the Socialists are aiming at.

I am thankful to say that my Tory memories still include the portly and pleasant figure of the regular tenant farmer, the man of from two to five hundred acres, who must inevitably disappear like other interesting members of the British fauna before the hand of the Socialist. I remember him as he was in his happy days:

Once tame and mild
As grazing ox unworried in the meads—

now, harassed by adversity, goaded by agitation, and so bamboozled by interested knaves, who would only make a catspaw of him, that he hardly knows his real friends from his false ones. I remember him and his hearty

welcome when he met you out shooting, and his home-brewed (oh, my eye !), and his cold beef, and his turkey at Christmas, and his half-sovereign always forthcoming at the charity sermon, and his brown broad-skirted coat, richly-flowered waistcoat, and neat grey stockings and smalls. The poor fellow has few half-sovereigns to spare now, all his turkeys necessarily go to market, and his home-brewed is fetched from the neighbouring pump. I allow that this fearful picture, which the ancients might almost have ranked with the *πριαμικά τύχαι*, the *ne plus ultra* of calamity in their estimation, is not universally true ; and I hope it may be growing less and less so every day. Many brave men have weathered the storm and reached land at last ; many more are still struggling with the waves ; but many, alas ! have sunk to rise no more.

My memory, however, still retains the image of one of whom I just caught a parting glimpse—just the ends of his coat-tails ere he vanished from the stage—and it is this glimpse which compels me to say a word or two about the jolly race of men I have just described, more perhaps, in the spirit of Cobbett than in harmony with my own affections. I have spoken with men who would say, perhaps not in so many words, that it was not for the like of them to shoot, who were angry with their sons if they dreamed of hunting, and who, in fact, represented the British tenant farmer as he was in the days of George Eliot. Now, if this mode of living had been continued for the first half of the nineteenth century, neither free trade nor agricultural depression would have fallen so heavily on the farmer's head. But they made no provision for a rainy day, and lived as if the Corn Laws would last for ever. Free

trade, while the good times lasted, did him no harm ; and I remember I used to meet about the roads in Leicestershire young farmers, mounted on capital hunters, admirably got up in buckskins, boots, and black coats, on their way to meet Mr. Tailby's hounds, or perhaps the Quorn, if it was their day on that side the county : and not apparently, as it seemed to themselves at the time, living beyond their means. But they made the mistake of supposing that the sun would always shine. So they had their hunters, and, where it was open to them, their pointers ; their sisters had their governesses, and the piano—and I don't know, after all, that one can very much blame them. Wheat being kept up artificially at a price which seemed to justify this expenditure, was it not in human nature to take advantage of it ? Many of those who did came to grief. I can recollect personally several who were sad examples of the truth of these remarks ; and in Leicestershire, if a man wanted to hunt and see anything of the run he could not do it very cheaply. But in the grass countries the farmers were not hit so hard as in the corn-growing districts.

CHAPTER XIX.

OXFORD TORYISM.

Distinct Types of Toryism at Oxford—Sewell—Dr. Marsham—Mncklestone—Mitchell—Dr. Routh—Tommy Short—Dr. Symonds—Plumtre and *Punch*—Dr. Pusey—His Toryism—An Apparition—Newman—Lost Causes and False Quantities—Mansel—Mark Pattison—Halford Vaughan—Brocket of St. Dunstan's.

How far it is allowable to talk of Oxford Toryism at the present day, when tramcars run down the High Street and over Magdalen Bridge, and the University is encircled by a cordon of upstart villas, against which the spires and the towers of churches and colleges rise up in silent and majestic protest, is perhaps a doubtful point. But when I was at Oxford, progress had not laid its profane claws upon the venerable home of loyalty, religion, and scholarship. The branch line from Didcot to Oxford had only just been opened ; and members of the University going northward had still to travel part of the way by coach. I remember very well riding outside the coach from Oxford to Rugby, and I think also to Blisworth, so that my readers may suppose that the *genius loci* had not at that time been very rudely disturbed. At Oxford there were two or three distinct types of Toryism, as probably there are still. There was the Tory by tradition—the man who, whatever opinions he held when he first came to Oxford, succumbed to its magic : the nameless spell which lurks

among its groves and cloisters, its gardens and its halls, redolent of romance and poetry. This was a kind of Toryism which did not often find expression in words, or in the noisy arena of party politics ; but it leavened the whole place, and even those whose conduct was not guided by it felt its influence, and tacitly and unconsciously acknowledged it.

In marked contrast with this variety was the old high and dry Tory to whom " Church and King " was a shibboleth, and who could with difficulty believe in any kind of excellence, moral, social or political, divorced from the idea which it embodied. The greater majority of the older Dons in my time belonged to this class ; but among the younger ones, who were soon in turn to become the majority, were many disciples of the New School, as it was then called, who had imbibed Toryism with their Catholicism as a matter of course, and who had not made shipwreck of their faith. " Our wrecks are upon every shore," said a member of the Tractarian party after it had seemingly gone to pieces ; but enough remained to build it up again, and these, perhaps, may be called the Church or Anglican Tories, men with whom the connection of Toryism with the Church of England was its chief title to their regard. Many of them drew the same distinction as Lord Beaconsfield drew between Toryism and Conservatism. One of the leaders of this party was William Sewell, senior tutor and sub-rector of Exeter College, who in his admirable novel of " Hawkstone " lays great stress on this distinction, and illustrates it in the character of his hero.

With these three different streams of Tory thought some, perhaps, might include a fourth in the shape of what was then coming to be called " Muscular Chris-

tianity." Most of the members of this school were good Churchmen ; but I don't think they could fairly be styled Tories at all. Sewell I knew very well. He was a very able man ; but whether he was a good college tutor or not is another question. He set himself, as a Tory Churchman of the Revival, to expose and resist the policy of the several Governments which had followed the Reform Bill of 1832, in their treatment of the Church of England. He had nothing in common with the old high and dry Tory, and he only went a certain way with the Tractarians. He was a bitter anti-Romanist, and I suppose he might be taken as one of the truest representatives of the *Via Media* which that period produced.

But the road was too narrow, after all. I don't think Sewell found that he made much way in Oxford, and he founded Radley as a college specially intended for the education of the young in his own religious principles. I never much took to him, and, though I shared his Church opinions, I found something more picturesque in quite a different class, who appealed at once to my sense of humour and my eighteenth-century sympathies. There was Dr. Marsham, the lay-warden of Merton, who had occupied this enviable position since 1826. He was a relation of Lord Romney, and father of the present police magistrate. He was a tall, handsome man, who used to walk about a good deal with his dogs in a stiff checked neckcloth and rather short trousers, such as were in fashion in the reign of George IV.—such as Pelham wore to show off the very small feet of which he was so proud. Marsham was a delightful survival of that period ; the sight of him carried one back to the pre-Reform days when the break-up of the old constitu-

tion was undreamed of; when the old order seemed founded on a rock, though it turned out only a sand-hill. I think Dr. Marsham was once talked of as a suitable candidate for the University against Gladstone; but though he would have made an admirable University member, he was not a big enough man to pit against Gladstone. Among my memories of Oxford Tories his figure stands out very conspicuously.

Another such man was Mucklestone, Vice-Provost of Worcester, who, however, was in orders; but he, too, used to walk out with his setters or pointers, dressed, of course, more like a parson than Dr. Marsham was, but in a style which implied that he felt himself quite unbound by any clerical rule upon the subject such as was generally observed in those days by the college authorities. He, too, belonged to the golden age when men slumbered peacefully under the shadow of ancient institutions in blissful unconsciousness of the coming earthquake. Another excellent specimen of the old high and dry man-of-the-world school was Mitchell, at one time Fellow and Tutor of Lincoln, afterwards Vice-Principal of Magdalen Hall. He was Public Orator, and a noted authority on logic; but I question if he was up to date in "Sir William Hamilton" or "Mansel." I have heard him lecture, and I doubt if his explanation of "second intentions" would have commended itself to those eminent authorities. He was much looked up to by the old Tories, and was popular with the undergraduates, being lenient to what were called youthful indiscretions. He was a fine, portly man, would have made an excellent head of a House, and in former days, *melioribus annis*, he might have been a Bishop.

A very different character indeed, and one whom I did not know personally, but of whom everybody spoke with the greatest respect and veneration, was old Dr. Routh, President of Magdalen, elected in 1791. He was in residence when Dr. Johnson visited Oxford, and perfectly remembered seeing him run up the steps of University College when he was going to dine in hall with his friend Mr. Scott. Perhaps this was the very occasion on which Johnson drank three bottles of port in University Common room, "without being the worse for it." Dr. Routh had witnessed also the ceremony of drinking to the king over the water, a practice continued in the Magdalen Common room down, at all events, to the death of Charles Edward in 1788. I did once see Dr. Routh as he was being wheeled about in his chair. That is a memory of which I am really proud. To have gazed on one who had seen Dr. Johnson at Oxford, and had shared in the last empty honours ever paid to the Stuarts in England, was indeed a privilege. To drink to the king over the water was to pass your glass, after you had filled it, over the finger-bowl. Dr. Routh died, I think, in 1855, having survived, said Newman, "to recall to a faithless generation what was the theology of their forefathers." He might also have recalled to them the Toryism of their forefathers, such as was professed by Mr. Pitt and Mr. Canning. Routh was one of those Tory Churchmen to whom the torch, burning dimly indeed, but never extinct, had been handed down through Jones of Nayland and Sikes of Guilsborough, and he connects one directly with that "ancient religion" which, according to Newman, had before the middle of the nineteenth century nearly died out.

Tommy Short, as he was familiarly called by every-

body in Oxford, was a Fellow of Trinity, and a well-known figure in the town. Tommy, I believe, was a fine scholar. He took a double first in 1812, and was a Tory of the pre-Reform era, though he probably imbibed his ideas rather from Eldon and Wetherell than from either Canning or Pitt. He used to dress in black, except his neckcloth, which was some check pattern, the one vanity which the high and dry permitted themselves. He, too, wore quite short trousers and low shoes, and seemed a relic of the past even more than Marsham. Short was a very able man, but he liked to moisten his classics with a glass of port, and after that join in a rubber of whist. I have played whist in the Common room at Trinity with Thomas looking over my shoulder, but never played at his table ; and, indeed, by that time he had come to prefer quadrille, to which he sat down on the evening in question after he had watched our game long enough. He was, in his day, quite a noted character in Oxford, and was a perfect specimen of the old Oxford Tory with all his honest prejudices, all his good port, and all his sound Latin.

Before I proceed to a younger generation, I must notice another of the old ones, in the person of Dr. Symonds, the Warden of Wadham and Vice-Chancellor, a very big man, who used to ride an equally stout cob, and was a very familiar object to all the undergraduates. I have often heard from men who were in residence in 1848, the year of European revolution, that some University wags pinned up on the door of the Union a revolutionary proclamation in which Symonds figured. I can't remember it all, but I recollect a couple of sentences : "The Proctors have resigned their usurped authority. The Vice-Chancellor has fled on horseback."

It purported to be issued by a provisional committee, among the members of which was "Bossum Operative." Now, Bossum was the Brasenose porter. I must not, however, forget Plumptre, the Head of University, of whom it was said that when Thackeray applied to him, as Vice-Chancellor, for leave to deliver his lectures at Oxford, and told him he was a contributor to *Punch*, he inquired gravely if *Punch* was not "a ribald publication."

I had the honour of Dr. Pusey's acquaintance, and I remember calling on him in his lodgings off the City Road when he went to live there at the time of the cholera in the East End of London. Dr Pusey was a gentleman of good family, who had been fond of hunting and shooting in his youth. There was nothing of the Don about him whatever. He was one of those Oxford Tories who, like Sewell, regarded politics chiefly from a Churchman's point of view, and, like Dr. Routh, he supported Gladstone to the last. He was on his committee in 1865, and by that time he had ceased to feel any confidence in either the will or the power of the Conservative party to uphold the best interests of the Church of England. But the Oxford revival of 1833 was a Tory movement, and Pusey was a Tory of the Gladstone stamp, such a Tory as Gladstone was when he thundered against the Reform Bill in the Oxford Union, such a Tory as was the author of "The Church in Its Relation to the State," such a Tory as Mr. Gladstone still continued to be when returned for the University of Oxford in 1847, beating Mr. Round by 173 votes. But Dr. Pusey's Toryism depended so much upon his Anglicanism that he had ceased to regard the Conservatives as true Tories any longer. This did not prevent him from having a high opinion of Lord Beaconsfield,

of whom he often spoke very kindly. He thought that the Public Worship Regulation Act was rather the doing of the Archbishop than of the Prime Minister ; nor did he forget the tone in which the Church of England was spoken of in " Sybil," or the portrait of Mr. St. Lys, the High Church clergyman.

Dr. Pusey was well acquainted with members of my own family, from whom I have heard many interesting particulars relating to him. But the following story is not exclusively traceable to any individual. It is no secret, and my daughter heard it from some friends abroad two or three years ago. Dr. Pusey firmly believed himself once to have seen the apparition of a departed friend ; and it is impossible to doubt that he had experienced something which, rightly or wrongly, he sincerely believed to be a supernatural visitation. The story, though it has never before been printed, is generally known, and I need therefore make no apology for introducing it here. He was taking a friend's duty for a time while the friend went away for a rest to some other village in the neighbourhood. Dr. Pusey stayed in the parsonage, and was one day working in the garden, when, on looking up, he saw his friend coming towards him. He supposed that he had come over just to see how things were going on and to have a talk with himself ; but before he could speak, the visitor made a communication too solemn to be repeated here, and walked away towards the house. Dr. Pusey, thinking only that his friend's mind had been affected by his illness, followed him into the house for luncheon. When he got in he asked the servant, " Where is your master ? " " Master has not been here to-day, sir," said the man. Still Dr. Pusey thought nothing of this ; but when he went

down into the village he was informed by one of the farmers that the absent vicar had died that morning. about a quarter to one, the very time when Dr. Pusey had seen him in the garden. A relation of my own now living at Oxford, who had previously heard it from another quarter, asked Dr. Pusey, with whom she was closely acquainted, whether it was true, and he replied that it was.

Dr. Pusey has been charged with encouraging young girls to neglect their home duties, and even leave their families, in order to join sisterhoods, and embrace the religious life. My own memory enables me to contradict this report, or, at least, to show that Dr. Pusey, before giving any such advice, was very careful to ascertain what the young lady's position in her own family really was—whether an only daughter, whether her parents were old or infirm and stood in need of her assistance, and when these questions were answered in the affirmative, the votary's inclinations, however laudable in themselves, were discouraged. I know that this happened in the case of a near relation, and I have no reason to believe it was a solitary instance.

Dr. Pusey is well known, in common with Keble and Newman, to have always recognised the influence of the Waverley novels in leading to the Anglican revival. Keble, no doubt, was under the spell when he wrote "The Christian Year," wrongly, as already pointed out, attributed to myself (!), and there can be no doubt of their effect upon the mind of Hurrell Froude; but, quite apart from the leaders of the movement, these immortal works must have prepared the public mind in general for the seed which was about to fall upon it.

Newman himself I never met ; and I cannot include him among my personal memories ; but I have always treasured up one sentence of his which occurs in a letter to a lady who had consulted him about the Roman and Anglican systems. He said, " If our Lord left a visible Church on earth, I believe it is the Catholic Roman Church," but he added that the question was beset with so many difficulties that he would not incur the responsibility of advising anyone to leave the Church of England for the Church of Rome. This, I think, runs a little counter to the popular prejudice about Newman.

Oxford has been called " the home of lost causes." I fail to see the justice of this description. The cause espoused by the Oxford movement of 1833 is so far from being a lost cause that, rightly understood, it has been victorious along the whole line. To appreciate the result one must be able, as I am, to remember the condition of the Church and the clergy, especially in the rural districts, as they were when Newman left the Church of England in despair, and as they are now. It is not all at once that the fruits of a great movement ploughing up soil which had lain fallow for a century, and disturbing settled opinions to which long habit and custom had given the force of principles, are visible on the surface. More than a whole generation was to pass away before the thorough transformation which the Church was destined to experience began to manifest itself, and even after the lapse of two more it is not yet complete. The change has been so gradual as almost to escape notice. It has, of course, been accompanied by innovations and irregularities of so startling a character as to attract universal attention. But these are only the rocks which the stream encounters in its course,

foaming and fretting round them so as to fix the gazer's eye, while its main current flows quietly and smoothly on with scarce a trickle or a murmur to show us that it really moves.

Lost causes may have come home to die at Oxford ; but the Anglo-Catholic cause is certainly not among them. The aphorism may possibly be justified by the fate of Latin prose. Elegiacs, we have been told, are already a lost cause. I write these words with pain, for I have many pleasant memories connected with longs and shorts ; and I shall never regret that I was guilty of two false quantities in eight lines, when I remember that the wretched man who failed to detect them was not a Tory. When "causes" of any kind fall into the hands of such men as these, no wonder they are lost !

Mansel, afterwards Dean of St. Paul's, I remember well. He was a disciple of Sir William Hamilton, who really revolutionised the metaphysic and logic of the Oxford Schools. He was a very able and a very witty man, and perhaps his verses published at Commemoration, in ridicule, if I remember right, of the German professorial system, then much favoured by the University Commissioners, and advocated by that very able man, Halford Vaughan, Professor of Modern History, will be remembered as long as his logic. Mansel, like the healthy old Tory he was, defended the old collegiate system and tutorial instruction. I can't remember many of his verses, but they began in this way :

Professors we from over the sea
From the land where professors in plenty be,
The land which boasts one Kant with a K
And a great many cants with a C.

Mansel took a double first in company with his old schoolfellow, Paul Parnell, who died, I think, in Australia ; and he was soon established as the leading science coach at Oxford. One of his favourite pupils was Palin, of St. John's, and when my own time came to go into training, I went into that stable.

I believe my science papers did my trainer justice ; but I had neglected other subjects, and Cowley Powles demonstrated with cruel precision that I had never read my Livy since I left school. The consequence was that I dropped into a second, and was only saved from a worse fate, as Mark Pattison not obscurely hinted, by a copy of Latin elegiacs, which pleased the examiners and caused me to say just now that I had many pleasant memories connected with that classic metre.

Mark Pattison I knew well. He was the head of my college after I left Exeter, and I saw a good deal of him afterwards in London. I remember his saying what a curious thing it was that no book had ever been written with the exclusive object of showing the benefits which Christianity had conferred upon the world. I suggested Swift's reason for not abolishing Christianity, which seemed to tickle him.

I have just mentioned Halford Vaughan. Him, too, I knew in the country ; for he was very fond of hunting, and used to take a house in my father's parish, near to Wistow, for that purpose. It was said by somebody that Halford Vaughan and Edward Twistleton were the two cleverest men in England. It is something to have known one of them, at all events. Vaughan used to hunt with the Vale of White Horse, and on non-lecture days, which in his reign were pretty frequent, he might often be seen trotting out as fast as an Oxford

hack would carry him to meet the V.W.H. or the old Berkshire.

I did not know Brocket of St. Dunstan's personally; but he was the hero of a story too good to be omitted, and was himself a distinguished man. I was once staying with a friend down in Wiltshire, when I met a rollicking sporting parson, who had been at St. Dunstan's when Brocket was tutor there. There are some elements of improbability in the story as he told it, I must own, but I have no doubt that the facts were substantially correct. While an undergraduate at St. Dunstan's he was dining out at a dinner party where Brocket was present—such was his tale—and when the dessert was placed on the table, the children came down, as usual in those days, and were expected to kiss the company all round. One little girl refused to kiss Mr. Brocket, whereupon she was scolded and told to kiss the gentleman at once. She still refused, and being asked the reason why, gave as her grievance that when she went out walking with Mary, "Mr. Brocket always kisses Mary and he never kisses me." Poor Brocket! He was not a popular man in college, and, what is more, at this time he was Proctor. And the little girl's words were spoken out loud before a large party.

Off rushed my informant, as soon as he could decently get away, flew back to college, and burst in upon a supper party which he knew to be going on with this delightful tale. The men waited till they knew that Brocket was back in his rooms, and then they sallied forth in a body and sang the words under his windows: "He always kisses Mary, and he never kisses me." The hank which they thus acquired over this unhappy Don was a joy to those many undergraduates who hated

him. I don't know how long the joke was kept up ; but I remember that when I was at Oxford some years afterwards, the story was still in general circulation, though it was not till much later that I fell in with the gifted author of it, who, I presume, was recording a personal experience. It may have been, and probably was, embellished ; but that some little Mary had been neglected and some grown-up Mary had been kissed is what, I sadly fear, we must believe.

Brocket, I believe, was a severe proctor. How different from the good little Pro. in my own college, who, when I unfortunately met with an accident among some rude boys at Godstow, having in lawful self-defence received a blow in the eye, which betrayed itself in the usual way, gently observed, " You know, Mr. Kebbel, a man may go through life without doing these things." And that was all he said ; a broad-minded, genial Tory, with wide human sympathies !

CHAPTER XX.

TORY INNS.

Rival Inns—Tory Inns on the Road to London—A Tory Tavern-keeper's Horror of Mechanics' Institutes—Tory Shops and Whig Shops—A Candid Tory Fishmonger—The Engine-driver and the Statesman.

IN his description of the inns at Eatanswill, Dickens was drawing no fancy picture. I remember the times when party feeling ran quite as high. In the palmy days of "the Road" all travellers were familiar with the rivalry which existed between Whig and Tory posting houses. Not that they were called by those names. They were blue or yellow, or green or red, as the case might be, the Whig buff being always called yellow. The distinction still survives in holes and corners of old England, and in the far west you may still, here and there, find some ancient hostelry which clings to its political traditions. I am old enough to remember the last of the posting days, when the steam-engine was just beginning to tread on the heels of the post-horse, and to supplant the stage-coach, as the motor-car supplants the omnibus. We used at one time to post up to London from Leicestershire in an old-fashioned chariot of our own, by way of Northampton, Woburn, Dunstable, St. Albans, and Barnet. All along the road there were inns which had a party bias.

But before describing what I can remember of those days, I must premise that in Leicester itself, which was our county town, the blue inn and the green inn had no dealings with each other. The "Three Crowns" was the headquarters of the Tory interest, the "Bell" being patronised by the green faction—for in Leicester green was the Whig colour. As most of the Leicestershire gentry were Tories, the "Crowns" used to boast of the larger show of private carriages in the stable yard on Saturdays, and did more, I should think, in the way of luncheons; but then the "Bell" had the better cook, and latterly I think the hunting men who came to Leicester lived at the "Bell." But at the time I am thinking of the "Crowns" was the leading inn. I can see old Bishop now—there were no "managers" or companies in those days: the landlord stood at the door to welcome you himself—and Bishop was the *beau idéal* of the old-fashioned Boniface. A stout, fresh-coloured man, who valued his own position as landlord of the great Tory inn in the great town of Leicester, and held himself entitled to look down upon all the green ragamuffins who frequented the "Bell." He felt that he represented the aristocracy of the county, the real blue blood. And there he stood at his door: looking all this and more, ready to exchange a joke with his more valued customers, who allowed him a good many liberties, but quite ready to stand upon his dignity with others not entitled in his eyes to equal familiarity. Those were not the days of photography, or I should certainly have had his portrait.

All the way up to London, if I remember right, the post-boys belonging to the Tory inns in one town

drove to the Tory inns in the next. At Northampton it was the "George," which, I believe, is still flourishing. At Newport Pagnell, the next stage, it was the "Swan." At Woburn the "George" again. At Dunstable the "Sugar Loaf." At St. Albans I have forgotten, but I think it was the "Verulam Arms." At Barnet it was the "Green Man and Still," the opposition house being the "Red Lion"; and I recollect that once when I was a very small boy we were driven to the "Red Lion" by mistake, and the post-boy was promptly ordered to turn back to the "Green Man."

I don't know how long these distinctions survived in London; but I have known one London inn-keeper of the deepest Tory dye, who was not ashamed to confess his faith in any company. He kept an ordinary in Newgate Street—the same house, I believe, which Charles Lamb used to frequent—and I remember some choice sentiments from his lips. I often dined there, for you got a very good dinner indeed at a very cheap rate, the landlord making his profit out of the ale, wine, and whiskey consumed by his customers. *A propos* of this, he told us one day of two men who used to dine there regularly, eat all they could, and drink only water, and who, on going out, said to him more than once: "Landlord, we can't think how you make this pay." But this is not what I was going to mention. We were talking one day of the early closing movement, to which he expressed himself as strongly opposed. "What's the good," he said, "of letting young men go away much earlier? They only go to public-houses or casinos; or else to Mechanics' Institutes, *which is ten thousand times worse.*" After this, the reader will not be surprised to hear of the condi-

tion to which he was reduced one evening when a City election had gone against us. I found him standing in front of his house, in the middle of the street, without his hat, with his hands raised to heaven, after the manner of Æneas, in an attitude of silent despair and unutterable mental agony. I shall never forget him. "*Respicias hæc?*" he seemed to be saying to the Ruler of the Universe.

How many of the old inns that I have mentioned are now standing I don't know. The last man who ever sought refreshment at the "Crowns" was offered a jam puff for supper, the only article of food the house contained. It is pulled down now, and other buildings erected on the site. I know nothing of the others. All that I have named were, in the days referred to, comfortable quarters, like the "Saracen's Head" at Towcester, where you were sure of a good dinner, good wine, and good beds. I remember sleeping all night at the Woburn inn, which, I suppose, however, was not a Tory one, and walking in the abbey gardens afterwards. I hear that bicycling and motoring are likely to resuscitate some of these old country inns, but they can't revive the life which formerly throbbed in them: the carriage and four rattling up to the front with some great man inside, and the cheery cry of "Horses on," which set all the ostlers in a bustle; the mail coach with its cargo of passengers all alighting to partake of the coach dinner, which was always very good, though it had to be eaten in a hurry; the constant stream of traffic, the horses, the waggons, the bagman's gig, the drover's herd—these will not come back with the motors. I am glad I can remember that I once rode in that odd little vehicle called a post-chaise, or I should

never have appreciated Mr. Pickwick's journey from Bristol to Birmingham.

Not only were there Tory inns in the old days : there were Tory shops and Whig shops. I remember very well when a blue family in the county bought some grocery, I think it was, from a shopkeeper in Leicester whose principles were notoriously green, that their conduct was very generally condemned. The circumstance was a good deal talked about, and fears were expressed in some quarters that the example might be catching. One of the principal booksellers in the town was one of the few remaining shopkeepers who hung up a sign over his doors—namely, the Bible and the Crown. There was a blue tailor and a green tailor, a blue shoemaker and a green shoemaker, a blue draper and a green draper. I don't think matters went so far as they did at Eatanswill, or that there was a green aisle and a blue aisle in any of the churches ; but in other respects the picture drawn in " Pickwick " is hardly exaggerated.

An influential Tory shopkeeper was then an important personage, as to some extent he may be still. Pike, the fishmonger, had, I think, nearly all the county custom. He was a clever, jocular, impudent fellow, who exchanged jokes with all the gentlemen who visited his shop, and was allowed a good many freedoms on account of his colour. One of the county members, remarking one day on some pheasants which hung up in the shop, was told that he would see some finer ones if he would step into the back room. He did so, and found himself in an airy apartment literally loaded with pheasants. " Yes, they are fine birds," said the Tory member. " They all come from Prest-

wold, sir," said the Tory salesman, with a grin. Now, Prestwold was the member's seat, and the birds were the produce of a poaching raid upon his covers. The member could only smile and look pleasant, for it would never have done to quarrel with Pike.

Party spirit penetrated into every hole and corner of the community. It reached even railway guards, stokers, and engine drivers. I remember the reply of a Midland driver who was proud of his engine and of himself, and regarded railways with veneration. We were talking in his presence about an eminent statesman, now deceased, who inspired both love and hatred in a very uncommon degree. He often travelled by the train which the engine-driver steered, and someone said, in joke, "Couldn't you contrive to drive over him?" "Such a death," said the man, "would be too good for him!"

CHAPTER XXI.

OUR VILLAGE.

Τοπρὶν ἐπ' εἰρήνης, πρὶν ἐλθεῖν υἱας Ἀχαιῶν.

The Village Described—The Vicar—Farmer Dryman—John Ashcot the Yeoman—The Village Blacksmith—Farmer Wright—A True Blue—The Feast—Christmas Celebrations—The Parish Clerk—An Antinomian Dissenter—A Versatile Constable—Village Termagants—The Scythe and the Flail—A Happy and Contented Population—The Clothing Club—The Old Poor Law and the New.

I HAVE introduced my native village in previous chapters, but I think some further notice of it may form a fitting sequel to the rambling recollections which have carried me so far from home. I now return to the spot whence I started when I received the letter which determined my future career. One who can recollect village life as it was sixty years ago can recollect something which is fast passing away, if it has not already vanished; and with that respect for antiquity which becomes a Tory, I am impelled to recall some features of it while they still remain fresh in my memory. I have, as a general rule, in these reminiscences, given the real names of the persons and places introduced in them. In the following description they appear under various pseudonyms, the reasons for which will perhaps become apparent to my readers as the picture gradually unfolds itself. This chapter is strictly consistent with what has gone before, because Toryism is closely associated with the history of the peasantry,

and the measures undertaken for their benefit both in the eighteenth and the nineteenth century. It may be news to some of my readers that something very like "three acres and a cow" was suggested by Mr. Pitt himself.

Some of the remarks on this subject which will be found further on are, in substance, a repetition of what I pointed out in my little work styled "The Old and The New," in the chapter on the peasantry; but my personal recollections of the effect produced upon the rural mind by the legislation of 1834, as soon as it came into full operation, must not be omitted from my Tory memories, contrasting, as it does, with the alleviations of poverty proposed by the rival political party.

Our village lies in a shallow valley in the heart of the midland counties. You descend to it from the high road by a narrow lane leading down to a small stream which sixty years ago was crossed only by a foot-bridge, and in a heavy flood was impassable. Immediately beyond it the road made a sharp turn, and the village street, or, as it was always called, "the town street," lay straight before you. On the other side of the village the ground sank again down to a considerable brook, which in those days held plenty of coarse fish—pike, perch, and chub. At the time referred to, the population of the village was about four hundred, the cottagers consisting in almost equal proportions of farm labourers and framework knitters, or "stockingers," who hired their frames from the county town, and took their work in when completed. The singing of their frames was a pleasant, cheerful sound, not unlike the note of the yellow-hammer; and as in those days a large amount of work was given out by the

wholesale firms, they were seldom silent. You may listen for them in vain now. There were, of course, as in all country villages, the usual small tradesmen, the butcher, the baker, the blacksmith, the carpenter, the shopkeeper, and the innkeeper. The church and the parsonage stood at a little distance from the village, the latter embowered in trees, so skilfully arranged that the house and grounds at a little distance might have been mistaken for the Hall.

I have already introduced my reader to the vicar. I must be pardoned if filial partiality seduces me into further notice of him. He was not a sportsman ; but he was fond of his garden, fond of his pigs and his poultry and of the small farm, consisting of about fifty acres of glebe, which he kept in his own hands. "A man he was to all the country dear," and at the time I am writing of was about sixty years of age. He had held the living then for nearly a quarter of a century ; and besides being a general favourite with the cottagers and the farmers, he had all the influence of the squire at his back. The vicar winked at the faults of his parishioners perhaps a little too much ; but he was, naturally, none the less beloved on that account. The two livings, which he held together, were not worth more than £300 a year ; but he had a small fortune of his own, which enabled him to live on equal terms with the neighbouring gentry and Squarsons, to dine with them and give dinners in return, and to lose half a sovereign at whist without being guilty of any gross extravagance.

In these remote country villages, seven or eight miles from any market town, before the days of railroads, penny papers, or primary schools, all things

must have always seemed the same from a very remote period. Unaffected by the outer world, and by that vague but irritating censorship called public opinion, the idiosyncrasy of the villagers was allowed to develop itself freely ; and though we could not boast a Mrs. Poyser, the parson could hardly make his round among the cottages and farmhouses, especially if he went about tea-time, without having something racy to repeat to his family at dinner.

At the bottom of the village or "town," as the street turned off towards the high road aforesaid, dwelt Farmer Dryman, an excellent specimen of the old school. He was the clergyman's churchwarden and right-hand man in the parish ; but he was a somewhat testy old gentleman, and looked with a very sour countenance on the parson's youngsters when they climbed over into his stack-yard or fell-to talking with the men threshing in the big barn, interrupting their work, as he complained. But his wife, a very clever woman, was the character of the village. The house faced the road, but there was a narrow side window at one end which looked straight up the street. Here she was to be seen at all hours of the day ; and not a soul could move about the village, nor a cart stop at a farmhouse, nor a visitor call at the parsonage, but she knew all about it. The window was known to the natives as "the turnpike," and it is needless to say that the owner of it was mistress of all the scandal which the parish afforded, and knew of all the births and deaths—who were coming into the world and who were going out of it—sooner even than the parish clerk. The old man belonged to that old-fashioned race of farmers who left field sports to the "quality," and the first

time he heard of his son going out hunting he refused to eat his dinner.

Nearly opposite Dryman's was the abode of a very different kind of man. Dryman used to come to church dressed very much like Mr. Poyser, with drab coat and breeches, and a richly-flowered waistcoat. His opposite neighbour, who was comparatively a newcomer, went in for gentility, always dressed in black on Sunday, with a black satin waterfall cravat and no shirt collar, as you may see in the portraits of Prince Albert and Charles Dickens. There was a strong spice of radicalism in this vain man, and he had been heard to say that he believed Latin was a very much over-rated language.

Further along, on the same side of the street, stood the house of our one yeoman, old John Ashcot. It was a substantial red brick house, covered with lichens, with a capital kitchen garden, and, as Harriet Smith says in "Emma," "with two parlours, two very good parlours indeed," and everything substantial about it. The Ashcots had been on the land for generations, but they made no pretence of ever having been other than they then were. They were comfortable people, and the Ashcot of my time, then about fifty, after dinner on a fine day, loved to stand out in the street in front of his door, slightly swaying to and fro under the influence of brown brandy, but quite conversible and affable, with a beaming smile for every passer-by. He was not a man with a very wide range of ideas, and had views of public affairs when they chanced to come before him which were, no doubt, racy of the soil, but savoured rather of the stable and the pig-sty than of any wider or more imperial field of thought. He was the author

of the theory quoted on another page, that it was no good having soldiers if they did not fight; they were only eating their heads off. His wife had the reputation of liking a drop as well as her husband, though she showed no signs of it in her face; but then, as Mrs. Dryman said, "she was a white drinker."

Further up the village on the same side of the way was the blacksmith's forge, the blacksmith himself being a good-humoured, beery man, who, when rebuked by the vicar for not going oftener to church, replied most respectfully that the parson had all *his* custom, the Methodies not standing high in his opinion. He did a very good business, and was a very popular man, one of the few to whom the parson's children were allowed to go out to tea at the village feast. Nearly opposite the blacksmith's dwelt a small dairy farmer, loved for his Stilton cheese, and feared for his short-horned bull, who was generally turned out with the cows in a field at the top of the village, through which ran the public road. None of the cross-roads in that part of the country were divided from the fields by hedges, so that the sheep and cattle often came upon the road, and the lowering countenance of the bull might be seen sometimes blocking a gateway, a sight which never failed to make the vicar's wife turn back from her evening walk. There were many stories about bulls in that grazing district; and had not the Ashcot bull gone for old Sally Cripps, who had hardly a rag to her back, and torn "her best dress," as she averred, to the vicar's intense amusement, before she could escape through a gap? At the top corner of the street dwelt the last of the five farmers who constituted the middle class of the little community—old Master Turner, as he was

commonly called, who likewise kept a bull so strongly suspected of vicious propensities that the ladies of the parsonage never dared to take the footpath across his fields. He was a good old soul, but I am afraid he was not very prosperous, and didn't enjoy his cakes and ale at Christmas and midsummer as one could wish him to have done.

At the Grange, a field or two outside of the village, lived Farmer Wright. He was a good farmer, and in some respects a shrewd, sensible man; but he was quite uneducated, and his way of describing his own age was peculiar. "I'm three years younger nor Sir Henry," he would say; "I allers was." Whether he thought that the simple assertion contained in the first half of the sentence stood in need of the confirmation afforded by the second; or whether, owing to his inability to pursue any long and difficult train of reasoning, he had halted in the persuasion that you might be three years younger than a fellow-creature one day, and three years older on another, I cannot say. But such was his invariable formula. In other ways, the mystery of existence seemed to puzzle him. He had just brought down a flock of sheep from some neighbouring pasture fields into the meadows by the brook already mentioned. That night there came a heavy rain, and in the morning the meadows were flooded. I came upon him as he leaned on a gate and looked over at the flood with a thoughtful expression on his broad, red face. He told me what had happened, without any tinge of anger or vexation, but with an air of profound bewilderment. "It seems so hodd," he said. If the event had not shaken his belief in the moral government of the world, it helped, I think, to produce a confused and despon-

dent frame of mind in the man. He finally solved the riddle by hanging himself in the cow-house, along of being cheated in the sale of a calf. Like all our farmers, he was a good Tory, and died lamented.

Another hearty politician, who had no doubt about anything, lived in a snug farmhouse at the back of one of the yards already mentioned. We all knew him too well to make any questioning about his principles necessary; but if questioned, as he was sometimes at the farmer's ordinary on Saturday, he silenced curiosity by the bluff announcement that "his grandfeyther wur blue, that his feyther wur blue, and that he wur blue hisself, as also his ladders, carts, and waggons." This uncompromising and far-reaching declaration of Tory principles was always received with great delight by the majority of the company, who expected it, and if any green individual who was present attempted to scoff, he was promptly sat upon by these excellent men full of roast beef and brown ale. In towns a man's angles get so soon rubbed smooth that one seldom meets with these dainty bits of character except among the village folks, whose nature in those days wore all its original freshness.

I remember being driven home one Sunday evening from a neighbouring village by a labourer, who was employed for the purpose, the coachman being ill. As I sat beside him in the dogcart, he told me at great length of an extraordinary story which he had just heard. He had been to church that morning, and had heard the story of Daniel in the lion's den, which he had never heard before, and which had made a deep impression on him. He repeated it to me just as if he had read it in the newspaper, and was retailing a long report for my

benefit. "Now this here Dannel, I suppose," were the words with which he commenced every fresh paragraph, so to speak, and you would have thought he was recounting some remarkable and surprising circumstance which had happened in the adjoining county. "This here Dannel," however, seemed after many repetitions to recall him to a sense of his own unworthiness. He allowed that he was in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity, and finally declared his regret that he was constrained to dwell with Mesech.

I remember that in those days the village children would commonly call their fathers by their Christian names. Our village carrier and publican, John Archer, was always "old John" to his sons and daughters. The carpenter, George Naylor, was always George. I remember the carrier's eldest son saying to me a day or two after the death of his eldest sister, who kept her father's house, "Ah, sir, this has been a bad week for John; he's lost poor Loo, and now the old mare's gone." John himself was a great character; but his sayings depend for their flavour on one's knowledge of the man himself, without which they would probably fall flat.

At midsummer came the festival already mentioned, the village feast, which to the unsophisticated inhabitants of that early date, unspoiled by travel, and ignorant of anything better, was an annual event of great solemnity and importance. It began on Sunday and lasted at that time nearly the whole week. Each farmhouse had its little house party. Every cottager had his bit of beef and his feast plum-pudding. In the streets were booths and shows, where sweets and crackers were sold to the children, and pig-faced ladies

and other invaluable properties were exhibited to their local elders. Fights pre-arranged between the local champion and the leading bruiser of any neighbouring village were usually brought off at the feast, affording a touch of nature, and a stimulating change after a surfeit of beef, pudding and unnatural curiosities.

Such, no doubt, had been the village feast from time immemorial, and the people enjoyed it with as much zest as they would have done in George II.'s reign. Taking the village communities as a whole, there had, I suspect, been little change in them during the intervening century, except in one particular. Sixty years ago the farmers had ceased to take their meals with the labourers, and very few of these, except shepherds and waggoners, lodged under their employers' roof. The men still wore their smock frocks, and sometimes came to church in them; but there was one old man who always came in a long, single-breasted frock coat of antique cut, made of coarse blue cloth. He was past seventy, and this was the coat he was married in.

Our parsonage had a good reputation among female servants. It was considered a marrying situation, and sixty years ago five village matrons who had been either cook or housemaid at the vicarage were all living in Kilby, within a few doors of each other. These were the privileged females with whom the clergyman's boys and girls always went to tea at the feast—not that tea had anything to do with it, feast plum-pudding—that incomparable luxury—and cowslip wine being the viands provided on such occasions. One of these matrons, however, once famous for her damson cheese, used to place “sloan wine” upon the board, which she declared was “quite as good as any port.”

There were a few outsiders, like the blacksmith, who were permitted to share in the honour of entertaining us ; but it was a very exclusive set, and those admitted to it had to bear all the odium which attached to "favouritism" in every walk of life.

At Christmas the farmers showed their respect for the Church chiefly through the medium of pork-pies, of which the vicarage larder was always full at this agreeable season ; coming fresh from the farmers' ovens they were bad to beat. They neither are nor were to be bought. The best that you can obtain from the best shop in London, which is supplied from the country, are but coarse imitations of the genuine article made at home and for home consumption. Old Mr. Dryman sent a couple of the finest and fattest barn-door fowls which any epicure might wish to taste. They always came with his respectful duty to Madam Kebbel : such was the formula which prevailed in Dryman's boyhood.

Christmas was a great time in the country villages of that date. The village church was always full on Christmas Day, and well decorated with holly and other suitable evergreens. There was no organ in our church at that time, and the village band occupied the front seats of a gallery at one end of it, with the school children and cottagers behind them. There was a fiddle and a bass fiddle, a clarionet and a bassoon, a flute and a trombone, and I verily believe a bugle. There were no hymn-books then, and the psalm to be sung was duly given out by the parish clerk. The bass voices usually remained sitting while the girls of the choir sang the higher parts ; but when it did come to the men's turn there was a rush and a roar like twenty

pheasants springing from the ground at once. Up rose three or four stalwart performers and thundered out their allotted part with all the power of their lungs, much to the satisfaction of the congregation, who no doubt would have agreed with Mr. Ashcot that they were bound to this performance in return for the support which they received, as otherwise they would be "eating their heads off." The louder they sang the more they showed their sense of duty.

We had afternoon instead of evening church in those days, and as it was over by 4.30, there was time for the band to make their round of the farmhouses in the evening of Christmas Day, winding up with the parsonage, where they usually arrived about eight. They assembled in the kitchen, and we all left the dining-room to receive them. They wouldn't have liked it had that compliment been omitted. Their united voices, combined with all kinds of music, were rather overpowering in that small apartment; but we always stayed out the "Herald Angels" and "While shepherds watched their flocks by night," which was "Madam's" favourite. After that we returned to our dessert, and the singers sang what they liked for the benefit of the servants; then with the five shillings which was the regular donation they took their departure.

The parish clerk was perhaps one of the most interesting figures who survived in our village to tell a weak-kneed generation, who were taking to trousers, what had been the official costume of their grandfathers. He was a shoemaker by trade, and that this may have added strength to his convictions that it behoved him to wear top-boots, is possible; but I am sure he was animated by higher motives as well, and that he felt

every Sunday, when he donned his tops, that he was honouring a great tradition, and that, somehow or other, in his mind top-boots and the Establishment, top-boots and Church and State, top-boots and Church and King were mysteriously connected together ; and, indeed, from one point of view, we might almost say that he was right. He was as loyal and devout as Joshua Rann in "Adam Bede," and once when the Dissenters asked him to tea, his indignation found vent in the exclamation that "they might just as well have asked Mr. Kebbel !"

But although the clerk held aloof from the Dissenters, the parson was not so nice, and would probably have accepted the invitation, not thinking it necessary to allow religious differences to interfere with his enjoyment of hot buttered toast, tea-cakes, and muffins. He regarded all his parishioners as equally under his pastoral care, and the Dissenters never gave him any trouble. Indeed, the "Bishop," who held high office in his own sect, was ready to allow that the vicar was nearly his equal in clerical dignity. He was the leading Dissenter in the parish, dubbed the "Bishop" by the peasantry, who possessed considerable native humour. He could drink a vast quantity of liquor, and was accustomed to say that "he didn't set no store by works."

He lived in the centre of the village, which consisted of one long and nearly straight street, commanded by the "turnpike," to which I have already referred, with small yards or other secluded recesses nestling in the background, on either side. One of these was called "the jetty"—why, I could never make out. It was a cluster of small cottages, intersected by one or two

narrow passages which you might have lived in the village a long time without discovering. It was situated at the top of the town, and the backs of the cottages looked out upon the fields ; but it was not the fashionable quarter, though gentleman Jarvis lived there, who for some reason or other was supposed to know something of high life, a tradition which he strove to encourage by making his wife fetch the beer, and refusing to mingle with the herd. But he was on easy terms with old widow Mullet, who was the owner of her little cottage and garden with the three apple trees in front, and "lived upright." Perhaps he saw in her something of the housekeeper type. Her life would have been peaceful and happy had it not been for the village idiot—for, of course, we boasted one—who haunted that end of the town, dressed in a red coat, waving a big whip, and indulging in loud halloos mingled with execrations, as though he were hunting a pack of hounds and cursing the foot-people. Nobody ever interfered with him ; but he frightened the poor old lady, who gave it as her opinion that folks who were "in that way" should be put in the stocks ; for that useful engine of restraint still existed in the village, and was very properly placed next door to the "Hawk and Hound," handy for the constable if folk inside became quarrelsome.

The constable in my time was a reading man, who "couldn't abide noevels," and his thirst for knowledge was such that, greatly to the annoyance of his wife, he would insist on using two candles in pursuit of it. With this intellectual superiority, of which he frequently boasted, he combined equal eminence as a workman, and could hedge and ditch, sink a drain—or "suff,"

as it was called in those parts—mow, reap, or thresh with any man in the parish ; but he occasionally forgot that the human head was not so hard as the barn floor, and in the discharge of his official duties, having bestowed what he called “ just a catch ” on some gentleman’s crown rather harder than circumstances warranted, he was compelled to lay down his staff.

Ours was not a quarrelsome village, but we had our roughs among the men, and our termagants among the women.

Two such I saw what time the labouring ox
With loosened traces from the furrow came.

It was about four o’clock in the afternoon when my sister was going her rounds, and Nelly Goreham stood screaming across the street to Sukey Stinger, on whom she was bestowing a few return compliments in exchange for some just received from Sukey, whose invective was powerful. My sister remonstrated with Nelly, who wasn’t a bad-natured woman, but not one to be crowed over by a rival. “ Was yer to stand there all day,” she said, “ to have your eyes tore out ? ” On another occasion my sister called on her, without any reference to the above little episode, and gave her some good advice. “ Yes, miss,” she said ; “ what you say is all very true and very good, and I like to hear you talk and read ; but we poor folks—we’ve got to scrat a living together : we must chance it.”

Peasants are usually credulous and superstitious ; and I remember once, when it was prophesied that the world was to come to an end at a given date, on the Saturday night before the appointed week a labourer who went for his wages told the farmer that he should not come to work on the Monday, as the end was coming,

but that, "if all went straight," he'd come again the week after.

One curious habit, evidently handed down from a very remote antiquity, survived among the Midland peasantry, and probably in most parts of England. I mean the practice of reckoning time by their meal-times. Thus, if something was to be done or was going to happen between twelve and one o'clock, they'd say it was "agen dinner time." Similarly, eight o'clock in the morning would be "agen breakfast time." They seldom or never mentioned the hour by the clock. I was often struck by this, because we find the same thing in Homer. When the Greeks break the Trojan line of battle, it is about the time when the woodcutter goes to his dinner.

I fancy that both stocks and constables, and possibly, though less likely, idiots as well, have disappeared from the town street in most midland villages. I should doubt, also, whether "Gentleman Jarvis," whose acquaintance with the aristocracy was indicated in so singular a manner, has left any successors behind him. Prefixes derived from agricultural or other occupations are, I suppose, still in use. We had Shepherd Crookman and Carrier Crookman, Farmer Bright and Carpenter Bright, Butcher Steel and Baker Steel, Tailor Shears and Gardener Shears—the latter employed at Wistow, where there were extensive gardens.

In those days machinery was comparatively unknown. The grass was cut by mowers, sometimes three or four in a row swinging their scythes *in numerum*, as the Cyclops did their hammers, and was made into hay with the rake and the pitchfork busily plied by the girls and matrons of the village, who looked for-

ward to haymaking as a holiday. The wheat was cut with the sickle, and the big stacks were gradually threshed out with the flail during the winter months, the litter affording an abundant supply of food to the small birds. It is not given to us very often nowadays to hear the mower whet his scythe, or to listen to the cheerful thud of the flail on the oaken floor of the barn. Each farmer then gave the harvest-home supper to his own labourers in his own kitchen, and the vicar, being a bit of a farmer himself, did the same thing, though he did not make one of the company. Sometimes others were invited besides those whom he employed ; and a certain drunken old soldier who had been with Sir John Moore at Corunna was always in great request, not only on account of his public services, but also for the camp stories which he had to tell, and the good songs he could sing.

Sixty years ago the peasantry and stockingers did not find village life dull, nor were they badly off. Cottages in the Midland counties did not have the gardens attached to them which one sees in eastern and southern counties. But allotment, as we have seen, had been introduced, and the vicar had devoted twelve acres of his glebe to this purpose. The people were delighted with these new field gardens. The produce fed the pig, leaving something for themselves, and the pig paid the rent. There was more life in the villages than there is now ; the people did not know that they were ignorant, and were not ashamed. Since that day they have eaten of the tree of knowledge, and their old simple lives and simple pleasures no longer satisfy them. But such a village as ours was in the middle of the last century contained, upon the whole, a fairly happy and contented population. Early in the year

Plough Monday brought its annual revel, when the cow-horns were blown and the mummers capered on the parson's lawn. At Whitsuntide the village club held their annual function, walking solemnly to church in the morning with staves and banners, and dining at the "Hawk and Hound" afterwards, with the parson at the head of the table. Summer brought the Feast, when the band played up and down the street nearly all day, and got so much beer from the farmers that towards evening their harmony grew rather irregular, and if you made any inquiry you would be told, perhaps, that the trombone was "merry" or that the big drum was "fresh." Harvest and harvest home followed; and when that was over it only wanted two months to Christmas.

This was an exciting season for the village dames, who were all members of the Clothing Club, and at Christmas they came up to the parsonage to choose their clothes. Their subscriptions ranged from a penny a week up to sixpence, and at the end of the year there was a bonus provided in proportion. The pence were collected by the clergyman's wife, and at Christmas the women all came to invest their little savings in petticoats, gowns, blankets, or other such articles of female attire or domestic use as they stood most in need of. It was an amusing sight, if a feeling somewhat deeper than amusement did not gradually creep in, as you watched the poor things tortured with anxiety how to lay out their little hoard to the best advantage, and distracted between the rival attractions of prints, stuffs, calicoes, flannels, linsey, wolsey, and other materials which, as Serjeant Buzfuz says, "I am not in a position to explain." They had to consider their

husband's tastes as well as their own, and sometimes these were as difficult to please as a dandy of the Regency. I heard of one poor woman who bought a piece of violet-coloured stuff to make a frock for her little girl. Her husband made her take it back because it "warn't violet, but downright ploom." It is impossible to spell the word so as to give it the exact Midland counties pronunciation. They were very particular about their mourning, as I believe the poor are generally, and would sometimes anticipate the sad occasion. Fancy Nan's mother, for instance, whose daughter was supposed to be consumptive, desired the draper's man to "take away them colours. I don't want no colours," she said, "with my poor daughter like to die. Bring me a murning print." Fancy Nan, so named by the village gallants, was a really pretty, graceful girl, who lived for many years after the "murning print" was bought.

In the early 'forties the new Poor Law was still highly unpopular with the labourers. The memory of what they enjoyed under the old one was still fresh; and, no doubt, the change did deprive the poor of many perquisites to which they had long been accustomed, and which they had come to look on as their rights. Into the thorny question of indoor and outdoor relief I am not about to plunge; but I really don't think that at the period referred to the poor in our own village, whether peasants or artisans, had much to complain of beyond the abolition of a system which, however immediately comfortable, was undoubtedly demoralising, and, from an economic point of view, ruinous. Persons well read in the history of the Poor Law will know there was a time when the working man in general,

to whatever order he belonged, had a horror of "coming on the parish." The well-meant, but perhaps not altogether wise legislation which was adopted during the distress occasioned by the French War, tended to impair this wholesome feeling, and by 1834 it had almost vanished.*

Between the end of the reign of George II. and the close of the American War, a great change had taken place in the condition of the English peasantry. The enclosure of wastes and commons had deprived them of many advantages which went to eke out their wages, and prices having risen at the same time, the pinch of poverty began to be more severely felt than ever it had been during the whole of the eighteenth century. Mr. Pitt proposed that industrial schools should be established in all the villages of the kingdom, and that the parish officers should be empowered to levy the necessary rates; and, what is more to the present purpose, that any person entitled to receive parish relief might take a lump sum in advance to enable him or her to buy a cow or a pig or pay the rent of a small plot of ground. Mr. Pitt wished to place parish relief on such a footing that the poor should not be ashamed of receiving it. He thought they had a right to it, and that there was nothing humiliating in the acceptance of it.

The pressure of foreign affairs prevented Mr. Pitt from carrying out this scheme. But an Act was passed in 1796 which became the parent of all the abuses of which the old system was prolific. Under this Act relief might be given in aid of wages to able-bodied men, and the parish authorities were at liberty to give clothes and shoes if they liked. The farmers seem for

* The next two pages are in part adapted from my "Agricultural Labourer."

a long time to have found this cheaper than paying higher wages ; but the system became intolerable at last, and then reformers rushed into the opposite extreme and destroyed the old parochial system altogether. It would have been quite enough to repeal the Act of 1796, which, besides its practical anomalies, did certainly tend to undermine the self-respect of the peasantry ; but the wholesale destruction of a system which had lasted for three hundred years, threatening, as it did, the entire withdrawal of outdoor relief, inspired the bitterest hatred among the agricultural poor ; and I remember that ten years after the Act of 1834 was passed the new Union workhouses were never spoken of by the labourers but with expressions of the strongest indignation. They were called "bastyles," a term which I hardly understood then, but which conveyed to my childish mind an impression of cruel hardships and privations endured by an unoffending class among whom I counted many friends. I can just recollect one of the old parish workhouses, then in ruins, which stood by the side of the road about two miles from our house. It was a small building with some garden ground attached to it, and could not have been capable of accommodating many inmates.

Statesmen like Mr. Pitt and Mr. Canning could take broader views of these questions than are taken by the professors of a rigid political economy. Mr. Canning, for instance, used to say that the old system was not one to be abolished with a light heart, and he attributed the general loyalty of the people during many trying periods to the existence of the old Poor Law, which gave them a hold upon the land, and attached them to the gentry. The Act of 1834, there is good

reason to believe, went beyond the necessities of the case. When outdoor relief was granted on a magistrate's order, it created a close and intimate connection between the landed proprietors and the poor, such as had existed for centuries. But one good effect the new system undoubtedly had. It revived the old aversion to parish relief which the Act of 1796 had gradually worn away. On the other hand, it made a change in the relations between the peasantry, the clergy, and the gentry, which, though only a necessary part of the much wider change in our whole parochial system effected by Earl Grey's Act, was not an un-mixed good. But at the time of which I am writing, there was little evidence on the surface of any such change of feeling. Village life in the Midlands down to sixty years ago, and later, was much what it was sixty years before that as described by Cobbett and sixty years before Cobbett as described by Lord Stanhope. In the second half of the nineteenth century the change began; but it proceeded very slowly till the agricultural depression of 1875 set in and an agricultural agitation commenced which put an end for ever to the rural England which I have known, and which the two above-named writers have described.

Yet the change, after all, was only accentuated by that great calamity. It must have come; and I often, in thinking of it, remember what Sir Walter Scott says in the concluding chapter of "Waverley" as to the change which had come over Scotland during the sixty years that passed between 1755 and 1805. That change, which he describes in detail, had, he says, "made the present people of Scotland a class of beings as different from their grandfathers as the existing

English are from those of Queen Elizabeth's time." It would be exaggeration to say as much as this of the change which has passed over the English village in the same period of time ; but something very like it may be said without exceeding the truth. As I am able to remember, if imperfectly, the old system as it was before any signs of dissolution had shown themselves, and as I believe it to have existed when Cobbett followed the plough and Gray wrote the "Elegy," I have taken a pleasure in recording these few reminiscences of rural scenes and habits of which, in a few years, there will be no surviving witnesses.

I try to hope that the present is only a transition period in the history of English village life, and that a future may be in store for it which will bring back the peasantry to their old homes.

But it will not bring back the village life of my childhood which I have here feebly endeavoured to describe, with its simple pleasures, its picturesque industries, and its original humours. These are gone ; the scythe and the flail, the stocking frame, the trombone and the bassoon are silenced. But many memories linger round them, and these it has been a pleasure to recall.

CHAPTER XXII.

RETROSPECT.

Childhood and Old Age—Effect of the Reform Act of 1832 on the Tory Party—Of the Oxford Revival—Of the Young England Movement—Protection—The Present Economic Reaction—The Future—Present Position of the Church of England—Decline of the House of Commons—A Last Word.

IN looking back over the period which these reminiscences embrace, I am sometimes reminded of what has been said concerning a future state—namely, that perhaps our life in this world may then present itself to our minds with only the same degree of remoteness and unreality as our childhood presents to our old age. It is difficult to realise the life we led as children, and still more to recall the thoughts, hopes, and fears of fifty years ago. If we look into the far past we can discern little figures which we know to be ourselves moving about on ground familiar to us; but what we were doing then, what we enjoyed, in what we were vexed, what we looked forward to, we can only very imperfectly comprehend. Of course, certain events will have taken place in the childhood of most men which stand out so far above the rest that they can never be forgotten, nor can the lapse of years either blunt or obliterate the impressions which they first produced on us. But these are few and far between. I am speaking of the ordinary daily life of which the even tenor

boasts no such landmarks, and which we look back upon across the intervening years much as we discern the dim outline of some distant shore across an arm of the sea.

It may be that this life will present itself to us in another world under very similar conditions. I believe the thought is to be found in Butler's "Analogy," and it suggests, as I have said, a parallel comparison between two periods of political and intellectual activity widely distant from each other. We cannot even for a moment throw ourselves back into our former selves ; or realise, except in the minutest degree, what it is to be a child. These reminiscences extend, roughly speaking, over sixty years ; and if I look a little further back and include what I heard from others of the period immediately preceding it, I find myself looking through a kind of haze, and have great difficulty in realising to myself how men thought and felt before the nation was roused from the moral repose which it had enjoyed for near a century and a half. That repose had not been materially disturbed even by the French Revolution. It was dispelled, never to return, by the storms which followed the death of Mr. Canning.

Before quitting the tangled skein of memories with which we have hitherto been engaged, a few final words may not be out of place tracing the separate effects upon Toryism of the several great movements, political, religious, social, and literary, by which the nineteenth century has been distinguished. Before the French Revolution, Toryism was not regarded as a purely defensive organisation. Before 1793 the institutions of the country were not threatened. The Whigs

were just as good Conservatives as the Tories, and they had reason to be. When they quitted this position, and, following the lead of Mr. Fox, joined hands with the Jacobins, the Tories were compelled to change their ground, too. As the Whigs became destructives, the Tories became Conservatives. The thing was inevitable: they came to regard the whole fabric of the Constitution and the security of the existing social order as specially entrusted to themselves. The Revolution of 1828-32 did not destroy their *raison d'être*, for there was plenty left to defend; but it unhinged and demoralised the party. The mortification of defeat, the consciousness that they had proved unequal to the task of defending the position which they had fondly believed to be impregnable, paralysed their energies; and when they were shown a way by which they might not only recover their lost prestige, but regain a position far stronger and more popular than the one they had lost, they had not the heart to follow it. Such was the effect of the Reform Bill on the Toryism of that era.

What, then, was the effect of the great religious movement which was taking place simultaneously? Just the reverse of what it ought to have been. Instead of acting as a concentrating and consolidating force, and giving the Tory party another great cause to fight for, the cause which had once been their own, "that ancient religion," as Newman called it, which had not yet entirely died out: instead of this, the Oxford Revival had exactly the opposite effect. It operated as a disintegrating force, and has continued to be an element of weakness in the Tory party from that day to this. This has not been sufficiently ob-

served. Mr. Gladstone would have rallied the party under that banner ; but they would not. He declared that he himself, soon after the publication of his " Church and State," " found himself the last man upon the sinking ship." This was not quite true. Mr. Gladstone, like Newman, was impatient, and had he stuck to his first principles, he might still have been successful. As it was, there was a cry against Puseyism, and though the Tory party were only very partially imbued with what went by that name, it divided them into two sections suspicious of each other, and disabled them from acting together with that perfect unanimity which the situation demanded. Such was undoubtedly the effect of the Oxford Revival on the Tory party after 1832.

Had the kindred movement, the Young England movement, any better success ? Here again the Tory party threw away a chance which in their better days they might eagerly have embraced, but which, in their then disheartened and sceptical frame of mind, was too heavy a task for them ; for be it remembered that the whole Revolution completed within the four years already named, 1828-32, and quite as important as the Revolution of 1688, had the effect which all revolutions have, and which Thucydides has so forcibly described. They breed a spirit of scepticism, distrust, and indifference to great principles. The Tory party had lost the firm footing which the old Constitution gave them ; and when a new field of action was set before them they had lost faith in themselves, and recoiled from the necessary effort. " It is clear from ' Sybil,' " says Mr. Froude, " that there had been a time when he (Lord Beaconsfield) could have taken up

as a statesman with all his heart the cause of labour, and if the younger generation to whom he appealed would have gone with him, he might have led a nobler crusade than Cœur de Lion." But they would not. The two greatest statesmen of the party appealed to them in vain. The shock of the Revolution had been too fresh to allow of their bracing up their energies again for so great an effort as was required of them. The principle of faith had been crushed in them, and though Mr. Disraeli's theories did not divide the party as the Tractarian movement did, the effect was to breed in them distrust of the only leader who was possible for them in the House of Commons, and to weaken their Parliamentary action on more than one well-known occasion.

On the other hand, the Tory party has been deeply and permanently affected by the great literary movement which began with the Lake School, and which, though Liberal in its origin, found its truest representative in the genius of Sir Walter Scott. In Scott and Carlyle Toryism has had the unspeakable privilege of having on its side the two writers who, it will be generally allowed, have influenced the political thought of Great Britain more than any two that could be named alongside of them. Macaulay, it is said, declined to write an article on Scott because he had done so much harm that he could not write of him in a friendly spirit, and did not wish to attack him. The harm was the good. When we think of all that the "old Scotch Tory," as Scott called himself, has done for us, we need not wonder at Macaulay's aversion to him.

As far as the greatness of any writer is to be measured by the effect which he produces on his own age, Scottⁱⁿ

modern times has had but one equal, if indeed he has had that—namely, Carlyle. The influence of the Waverley novels operated in two different directions. It contributed powerfully to the growth of that younger Toryism from whose loins sprang the powerful and popular Conservative party of the present day, and it prepared the soil for the reception of that Anglo-Catholic revival which, with all its errors, has been the salvation of the English Church. When we consider the magnitude of the issues at stake, the interests, both temporal and spiritual, in defence of which these two forces are combined ; when we think of the influence to be exercised on future generations by the victory, or the defeat, of either in the struggle which is imminent ; when we think of all that Scott may have been instrumental in saving for us, and, if the evil days must come at last, the long respite he has gained for us ; when we look back on the sixty years' war, and note the varying fortunes of the fight, the advance, the retreat, the surging assault, the obstinate defence ; and reflect how much the cause of faith and loyalty and order has owed to the genius of Sir Walter Scott, those who still fight under this ancient banner may perhaps sympathise with one who can boast that from childhood he has sat at Sir Walter Scott's feet.*

At the unveiling of the bust of Sir Walter Scott by the Duke of Buccleuch in Westminster Abbey, of which I have spoken in an earlier chapter, a striking testimony to the admiration with which that great writer was regarded in America was afforded by Mr. Hay, the American Ambassador. The American mind, he said, was peculiarly sensitive to the romance of courts

* See *Quarterly Review*, April, 1895.

and princes ; and in the Far West, in the forests and the prairies, the Waverleys were as warmly appreciated as in Washington and Boston. His father, he added, had often told him he remembered when young men would ride thirty or forty miles to the nearest town to know when the next Waverley would be published.

On the same occasion an interesting speech was made by Mr. A. J. Balfour, calling special attention to Scott's influence and popularity on the Continent, to which the only two English writers who could be said to make any approach were Richardson and Byron. To what was this due ? In large part to the fact that Scott's great merit did not lie in style or niceties of style, which many men do not always understand. He relied on "broad effects and serious issues," which all could appreciate. Scott had the benefit of one great secret of success to which most great men have been indebted, "the coincidence of special and exceptional gifts with special and exceptional opportunities." The reaction against the eighteenth century was, said Mr. Balfour, Scott's opportunity, and he was ready for it when it came. He took it at the flood. The reaction was towards romance, the romance of the past, of feudalism, chivalry, and catholicism, and Scott reclothed the dry bones and made them living realities, and his characters living representatives of them.

In Scott's Journal of July 13th, 1827, we read, "Two agreeable persons, the Revd. Mr. Gilly, one of the Prebendaries of Durham, with his wife, a pretty little woman, dined with us." I met the "pretty little woman," at Measden in Hertfordshire, where she was staying with our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Rudge, Mr. Rudge being rector of

the parish—the same house at which I was staying when invited to shoot with Lord Strathnairn. Mrs. Gilly was then a charming old lady between sixty and seventy years of age. She had married Dr. Gilly, who was much older than herself, at the age of seventeen, and she used to tell us of Sir Walter Scott's surprise when she and her husband drove to Abbotsford, and Scott, as was his wont, came up the gravel walk to meet them. "Why, she's quite a young thing!" he exclaimed. She described him as very lame, and apparently a short man, which he certainly was not, but he was much bent at that time and would look so, no doubt, as he hobbled up with his stick to the door of the carriage. She was, of course, delighted with him, but hardly more than we were at hearing her talk of him.

I remember well, too, my own first introduction to the Waverleys, and how as children we used to discuss them with our playfellows, the young Halfords. What desperate young Tories and Jacobites we all were! How we stood by Claverhouse and Rob Roy, and Peveril of the Peak, and Fergus M'Ivor, and Redgauntlet and Ravenswood, and Queen Mary! We were too young, I think, to appreciate the exquisite humour of such characters as the Antiquary, Bradwardine, and Nicol Jarvie. And neither the first nor the last of these three was a Tory. The heroic was what appealed to us, as it does to all young minds. And I have little doubt that from reading the Waverleys continually, as I did between the ages of ten and twelve, my mind received a bias which determined my future principles. In Mrs. Gilly I found one who had actually come in contact with the magician, and to touch the hand which had once touched his seemed to

me, even at the sober age of forty-five, to be a great privilege.

Opinions may differ about the literary merits of the Waverleys. Of their political influence there can hardly be two opinions. As much may be said of Carlyle's writings. The poetry of Toryism in Scott, and the strength of Toryism in Carlyle, have, the two together, shown how powerfully that creed appeals to both the imagination and the reason, without the aid of which no political system can ever be either permanent or popular.

Such has been the effect of the literary movement of the last century. I am now, however, approaching delicate ground, and the probable influence on the Tory party of the economic reaction to which the twentieth century has given birth I shall not venture to discuss. It may be disastrous. It may, on the contrary, tend to the re-connection of broken ties, the rupture of which is the worst misfortune which has ever befallen Toryism. My own idea is that the Tory party now should give their adversaries rope enough. If we try to compete with them in what is called a constructive policy, they can always go one better, for they don't care how far they go, and Tories do. Let the Tories be true to their great trust, true to their great chief, and exorcise that evil spirit which makes a party turn upon its leaders as soon as fortune goes against it—a fault, I am sorry to say, which has been only too conspicuous in the history of the Tory party—and their turn will come round again, sooner, perhaps, than they think for. If they choose “to throw a pearl away richer than all their tribe,” they will wander many years in the wilderness before they have atoned for their error.

Such memories as I have recorded relating to the

Church of England naturally suggest the question whether the changes we have noticed have left her stronger or weaker than she was before. What she may have lost in one way she has gained in another ; but to balance the loss and the gain would lead me too far afield, and would be tantamount to a set essay on the Church. I have no doubt that over large masses of the population she has greatly strengthened her hold. The real energy and self-devotion which distinguish the clergy at the present day are probably more fully appreciated in the towns than in the country, while the *bonhomie*, the rural tastes and the social sympathies displayed in such an eminent degree by an older generation of rectors and vicars are, perhaps, not equally visible in their successors, who may possibly have lost ground in the rural districts, where these qualities are specially valued. I do not say that they have, but if they have, the rural loss is less, I should think, than the urban gain. Moreover, the high ceremonial, the music, and all that makes for beauty in the Anglican service appeal to a class of minds more likely to be met with among the artisans than among the peasantry, with whom at first these changes were far from popular.

On the whole, though I cannot offer any decided opinion either one way or the other, I should say that the Church as an institution is neither weaker nor stronger than it was at the accession of Queen Victoria ; but that her character in the estimation of the more educated and intelligent classes has appreciably risen. I have always been of opinion, and am still, that one great source of strength peculiar to the Church of England is the social position of the clergy. They are, as a rule, gentlemen ;

and let certain persons say what they will, the working classes like gentlemen, and like to be addressed by them. If ever anything should occur to deprive the Church of the special advantage which she thus enjoys, or greatly to diminish its extent, the truth of what I say would, I think, very speedily be recognised.

Let me not be misunderstood, I am speaking of the Church of England as she is: a great national institution representing a great deal more than the body of doctrine handed down to her from the Apostolic ages. She is part of a great social system, a great constitutional organisation, as well. And, regarding her all round from both these points of view, what I assert of her is true. It would not be true of religious institutions concerned with religion alone. Their strength is derived from a different source, and may in some circumstances, as Dr. Johnson himself admitted, be more effective than that of the Established Church. Mr. Disraeli's speeches at Aylesbury (November 14, 1861) and at High Wycombe in October, 1862, are a masterly exposition of the theory thus briefly indicated.

To pass from the Church to the State: the difference between the House of Commons as it is now and as it was sixty years ago is too generally recognised to require much notice from myself. That the House has risen in national estimation since the legislation of 1832 scarcely anyone pretends to say who has any knowledge of the subject. Mr. Gladstone himself was one of the first to recognise its decline. The same prestige no longer attaches to the position of a member, which is at once more irksome and less dignified than it used to be, the natural consequence being that the same class of men no longer care so much for a seat in

it. The gravity of this change may not be apparent to the Labour Party and the Socialists, who hope to find their account in it ; but to all thinking men who have no object of their own to gain by the deterioration of Parliament, it has long been a source of great anxiety.

These " Memories " have been my companions now for nearly twelve months, and if anyone in reading them experiences a tenth part of the pleasure that I have taken in recording them I shall hold myself extremely fortunate. Mr. Disraeli has said in one of his novels that there is nothing so sad to look back upon as a youth that has not been enjoyed. I cannot say that of my own youth ; and in a great part of these reminiscences I have been enjoying it over again. But what is endeared to one's self by a thousand associations cannot awaken the same feelings in others, and the record must depend for its popularity solely on the degree of interest or amusement which the subject matter is of itself calculated to afford. I have not taken Toryism too seriously. I have tried to avoid as much as possible controversial questions and party politics ; but I did not feel called upon to exclude them altogether, or to refrain from the expression of my own opinions where it seemed natural to introduce them.

I have written as a Tory, and spoken freely of such as are hostile to the political faith in which I was brought up ; but in alluding to party tactics and parliamentary manœuvres I have always meant to make it plain that I regarded them as the legitimate instruments of party warfare, and that at all events I did not consider these

pages suitable for the discussion of political morality. Where I have condemned measures, I have not, that I am aware of, traduced motives, or suggested that every attack upon principles which I hold to be sacred must necessarily be dishonest.

On closing the series, and looking back across the long years through which it has travelled, I trust I am not mistaken in believing that I have said nothing which can be thought injurious either to the feelings of the living or the memory of the dead. Of the various scenes and incidents herein depicted, I have always endeavoured to make the humorous aspect the predominant feature ; and if in the long train of anecdotes, jocose, sarcastic, or grotesque, which necessarily occupies a large portion of the book, I have left anything of a nature to annoy or to misrepresent a single individual, either public or private, I hope, whoever he may be, that he will accept the apology thus tendered beforehand for what, if inconsiderate, was certainly unintentional. Toryism, like Liberalism, is only one form of giving expression to a sentiment which affects all our views of life and human nature in general, as well as of politics in particular ; and many things appeal to it that are not necessarily connected with the creed which bears its name.

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